

# COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN  
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS. ILLUSTRATED.

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Photo. H. S. MENDELSSOHN,

THE DUCHESS OF ALBANY.

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THE Journal for all interested in  
Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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### EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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## THE CURE OF . . . CONSUMPTION.

IN the first spring of the twentieth century a National Congress on Tuberculosis is to be held in London; and at a meeting in furtherance of its objects which has just taken place it was announced that the Prince of Wales has not only accepted the presidency, but will actually take the chair at its deliberations. The world grows more impatient as it waxes older, and fifteen months seems a long time to wait for anything; but the Berlin Conference on the subject is so recent that a similar gathering just now would, it is to be feared, make no useful additions to our knowledge of the curative treatment of this most devastating disease. A delay of a year and a quarter, on the other hand, will at least allow a further interval for the collection of data regarding that "open-air" treatment of consumption which promises to do more for phthisical sufferers than any method which has yet received active assistance from doctors. It is early days to prophesy or dogmatise about the success of the Nordrach "cure" in England; but Dr. Walther himself and his continental followers have already made it abundantly clear that, provided the disease has not made inroads so serious that no restorative influences can be of any avail, results which at one time were never dreamed of can be obtained in a few months. We have yet to learn, from extensive and prolonged experiment, whether the moist atmosphere of this country—an atmosphere in itself highly favourable to the development of tuberculosis—will permit of any such success as that which has been achieved at Nordrach and in many other places. So far, unquestionably, there is reasonable cause for encouragement, notwithstanding the awkward circumstances that a damp soil and a humid atmosphere are two of what may fairly be called the three principal causes of consumption. The third, and perhaps the most important, predisposing

condition is bad ventilation. That is a difficulty which Brehmer, who first formally taught the open-air treatment, and his disciples after him, have solved completely, not to say heroically. They do not permit the patient the smallest chance of breathing vitiated air. Summer and winter, rain or shine, snow or storm, he lives in an air bath. The most certain means of catching cold, says Dr. Walther, speaking now of the healthy and robust, is to wear an overcoat; and if the open air be good for those who are strong and well, surely its effects upon the sick must be highly curative. That abundant fresh air which diminishes fever so rapidly, and will do more for wounds than dressings can compass, must be equally restorative to tuberculous lungs. So runs, in the briefest and simplest language, the Nordrach gospel.

This, as the unlucky patient who begins an open-air cure in January recognises very speedily, is going to Nature with a vengeance, and it is not difficult to believe that even those who have been brought back to health by these simple means found the cure distinctly uncomfortable, in the early days at all events. But the treatment is really not quite so simple as it seems. It is not enough in itself that the sufferer should be exposed day and night to the zephyrs of July and the eager air of December. He must be protected from cold winds and draughts; his sensitive lungs must not be irritated or poisoned by dust; his system must be strengthened by abundant and nutritious food to withstand the unaccustomed rigours, which, however gaily they have been faced by primitive man, are trying enough to a race which has grown soft and hairless by uncounted centuries of some more or less highly-developed form of apron wearing. There is probably not much to choose between stale air and air which is vitiated directly it reaches the house, and in the many foreign and English sanatoria in which the Nordrach cure is followed, the most elaborate precautions are taken to prevent the atmosphere becoming dust-laden. Inaccessible nooks and corners are among the principal causes why dust accumulates; it lies beneath and hides itself behind furniture. In every sanatorium in which a constant current of pure air and relentless high feeding are relied upon to combat tuberculosis, the most elaborate precautions are taken to avoid dust-traps. Stationary furniture is raised well above the floor by blocks of wood placed beneath the legs, and it is kept standing some little distance from the wall. Dust can thus be detected and removed before its particles can lessen the purity of the atmosphere. In at least one sanatorium the ends of the rooms even are rounded, on the principle that corners breed microbes. And if the patient be thus protected from breathing air into which inimical particles may have found their way, he is equally well defended from cold and draughts. When he reclines out of doors he occupies a portable garden-hut or "sun-trap," so placed that it is always turned to the sun—when that orb is visible to the naked eye—or a verandah, which likewise catches the sun, and is protected by translucent curtains, or, more frequently, by a wind-screen formed of wire, such as that used for aviaries. The blast is thus tempered sufficiently to prevent chills. This constant contact with the air day and night induces the most amazing appetites. Eating, indeed, is one of the essential elements of the cure. "The kitchen," we are told, "is relied upon as the best pharmacy." Every patient is fed up like an odalisque in training to become a sultana, and to charm by the dear delight of avoirdupois.

That this treatment has been highly successful in a great number of cases which were still in a condition to be benefited by curative process is incontestable. Many of us have personal knowledge of the remarkable manner in which men and women of all ages have returned from a three or six months' residence in an open-air sanatorium, healthy in body and mind, and ready to resume the active work which they had been compelled to put aside. It is easy, no doubt, to expect too much from a new method of treating a disease which is so terribly insidious, and so readily communicable that it sweeps away countless thousands of victims every year. Nor is the open-air treatment the first remedy for consumption which has been introduced of late years with a great deal of confidence. It is only a decade ago that a tremendous sensation was made by Dr. Koch's discovery of the *bacillus tuberculosis*, the specific organism in the lesions of the tubercle, which appears to cause all the mischief. Dr. Koch speedily got to work with his "tuberculin," a glycerine extract of a pure cultivation of tubercle bacilli, in which the parasites had been killed, which was injected under the skin. His belief was that consumption in an early stage could be cured by from four to six weeks of this treatment; but that expectation has not been fulfilled, and the tuberculin "cure" is, in effect, a failure. Medical science has thus, apart from the open-air method, been thrown back upon the old remedies—cod liver oil, recourse to arsenic and sulphur springs, sea voyages, and so forth. We cannot, however, forget that the Nordrach system has been far more successful in a greater number and variety of cases than tuberculin ever has. Its progress will be watched with anxious concern throughout the world, and nowhere more so than in our own consumption-ridden country. Already there are about a dozen open-air sanatoria in England and Scotland; but it is a melancholy reflection that, save within the walls of a few great hospitals, the

treatment is possible only for the well to do. And it is obvious that the "cure" cannot possibly be carried out properly in a crowded town, where the atmosphere is eternally charged with injurious particles. In the first six months of 1899 the North London Hospital for Consumption was successful with nearly half the consumptive patients who were treated there in the Nordrach manner; but experience shows that the results in the rural sanatoria are much more encouraging. The system being based absolutely upon a never-ceasing supply of fresh and uncontaminated air, it will necessarily follow that, directly it has established its claims in England, all our town hospitals for consumption will be compelled to consider the propriety of removing to rural quarters, where the air of heaven is uncharged with smoke, and with the myriad particles of dried matters which, irritating to the robust, only too often mean incurable misery and untimely death to the tuberculous patient.



BY universal consent Mr. Chamberlain's speech of Monday night was one of the most dignified and statesmanlike efforts of his political life. Up to the time of its delivery the debate on the Address, albeit brightened by occasional flashes of real power, like Mr. George Wyndham's and Sir George Grey's speeches, had been not merely stale and unprofitable, but also absolutely injurious to the common weal; in a word, humiliating to both parties. Mr. Chamberlain, grave as befitted the occasion, solemn, incisive, determined, expressed the mind of the country; and one phrase of his went straight to the heart of the nation: "I say, speaking for the Government, that in so far as in us lies there shall be no second Majuba. Never again with our consent, if we have the power, never again shall the Boer be able to erect in the heart of South Africa a citadel whence proceed disaffection and race animosity to endanger the paramountcy of Great Britain. Never again shall he be able to treat an Englishman as if he belonged to an inferior race." The House cheered again, and in this, if in little else, the country echoes the House.

Without a doubt there are many of us at home who, without desponding, are inclined to take a far more gloomy view of the South African situation than those who are on the scene of action. This we had learned privately long before Mr. Winston Churchill sent his stirring message to the *Morning Post*. "We who have been in South Africa," said a returned officer, "cannot understand the feeling at home about the business. There we are full of confidence." Reuter's message published on Monday practically takes the same view, and it is really rather a wholesome corrective to the essentially English custom of grumbling about everything, good or bad. That grumbling no doubt has its advantages, as the results prove abundantly. For example, all sorts and conditions of men, having for the most part the possession of ignorance only in common, grumbled at the transports found by the Admiralty at a time when the whole civilised world was full of admiration. Thereupon the Admiralty tried to get superior transports, and, although the superior transports—the alleged superior transports—which were also supposed to be the best conceivable, were not a bit better than the others, they at least served to prove that the others were the best. Then we have grumbled at the marksmanship of our soldiers, at our artillery, and at our generals. To all of these, except the part that relates to the generals, Reuter's correspondent gives a useful answer. At Rensburg, where the Berkshires and the Boers have been engaged in the sporting practice of sniping, the Berkshires have had much the better of the encounter. Similarly at Enslin, the Northampton's distinctly outshot their Boer adversaries. By the way, this practice of sniping, which is rather like the practice of boyhood of lying in wait with a gun for rabbits or rats in the evening, sounds about the most amusing part of the war.

But the most encouraging of all is the report of the skilled correspondent that the men, splendidly fed through the

Army Service Department and in the best possible condition, are rapidly assimilating the ways of the country, are learning, that is to say, to take advantage of cover wherever opportunity offers, and are showing—this applies particularly to the colonial troops—an aptitude for scouting quite equal to that of the enemy. The fact is that our soldiers are adaptable enough, but have had no opportunity during peace manoeuvres to learn to use cover. The Long Valley at Aldershot is excellent practice for men going to the Soudan; Salisbury Plain is grand galloping ground; but if it be really desired to train our troops for hill fighting, such as that in the Transvaal or in the North of India, manoeuvres ought to take place in the mountainous parts of Scotland or Wales or the Lakes. Given the opportunity, our men are not backward in taking cover, and the knack is learned quickly when bullets are flying.

The lack of water at Spion Kop is a foretaste of a trouble that is likely to make itself severely felt before our campaign in South Africa is more than six weeks or so older. The dry season in all likelihood will have set in by that time, and if measures are not taken, by means of artesian borers, for raising water from the lower strata, there will either be terrible suffering or else practical immobility. We ought perhaps to take it for granted that this trouble has been foreseen, and means taken to meet it; but so much that seemed fairly obvious has been unforeseen, that faith grows weak. For the present the streams are full and the veldt is green, where the all-devouring locust has not passed over it; but it is not always going to be so.

Of the many different and excellent ways in which people, according to their opportunities, are helping the cause of humanity and of Empire, *imperium et libertas*, none can well be more excellent than that of putting at the disposition of the authorities country cottages as convalescent homes for wounded soldiers returning from South Africa; only we most sincerely hope that use will be made of these offers with more consideration and discretion than in a case to which we made reference recently. Some officers themselves, as well as officers' widows, may be in no less need of the charitable assistance that they have so well deserved of their country than the private soldiers, but the form of application for such assistance ought not to be the same, nor hedged about with the same ceremonies and safeguards, in their case as in the case of the private. To say this is to assert for them no claim to any unjust class privilege.

Not before time a committee of the Board of Agriculture has been appointed to enquire into the adulteration of milk. It was publicly stated a short time ago, without contradiction, that three-fourths of the milk we drink is copiously watered, and anyone comparing the liquid served to him in London with that which he obtains in the country, at the very spot, perhaps, whence it is supposed to be brought, will readily believe it. Cream, as we get it, even in a good club, always seems to have lost its best qualities by transmission. As it can be easily kept in air-tight bottles, one wonders why enterprising farmers do not push the trade in half-pints, such as are sold on an American steamer. The price gives by far the better return from the cow than any other dairy product, and genuine cream as a tea delicacy would meet with very wide appreciation.

We expect it will be difficult to fit the saddle on the right horse and say exactly who it is that works the pump. London milk goes through a great many different hands. It may come from a cow fed as far away as the borders of Somerset or Derby or Norfolk. The farmer is probably innocent. He sells it at 4d., 5d., or 6d. a gallon to some local dairy which supplies a town dairy, which in turn passes it on to a milk-seller, one who has made a "walk" for himself. Rumour hath it that some of the various companies have "blending" apparatus, and add the water by rule and measure, others that the milkman on his round carries two cans, one of genuine milk, the other of water, just white enough to look like milk, and that he knows his customers, mixing to suit the individual taste. Who blows him up most energetically is likely to get the best service. As his legitimate profit is close on cent. per cent., and the value of his walk when he puts it up for sale from £20 to £40 per barn gallon sold daily, one would think he should be content.

Plain figures often beggar rhetoric for eloquence; witness those that tell a tale of dead meat. There are 138 great ships on the high seas carrying frozen beef and mutton to England, 70 from Australia, 38 from New Zealand, and 30 from the River Plate. They are fitted to carry a total of 6,753,800 carcasses. In addition, 11 other vessels are being built, and in London alone there are 17 refrigerating stores, with a total capacity for holding 1,484,000 carcasses. One need not point the moral; the British farmer can do so for himself. But the cheering thing is that whereas the cheap meat renders it useless and unprofitable

to fatten old dairy cows and aged ewes in the antique style, the demand for English beef and mutton of the first quality is as great as ever. Against these no competition can stand.

People seem to be expecting far too much from the experimental stations started by several of the County Councils. In Sussex excellent results have been obtained by manuring with basic slag; in Staffordshire the same substance applied in the same way has proved useless and injurious. Behold a contradiction! One is surprised at the way experts write about it. Plain common-sense ought to tell them that one experiment in agriculture has no value at all; it has to be repeated again and again under varying conditions of climate before any deduction can be drawn from the result. Twenty years after the people will begin to learn what is worth knowing from these experiments.

Once more a great wail is being raised in the West of England, this time in Cornwall only, owing to a report having been spread to the effect that again a river—the River Lynher—is to be polluted, and its fish—salmon, peal, and trout—ruthlessly destroyed. This picturesque stream rises in the Cornish hills, and finally joins the Hamoaze below Saltash. Prior to the year 1860, or thereabouts, it was considered to be the best fish-carrying river in the whole of Cornwall. Then suddenly a poisonous stream from a mine on the Caradons polluted it throughout its entire length, and until about two years ago, when the Phoenix mine stopped working, the waters of the Lynher were as devoid of life as those of the Dead Sea. Now a fresh mine is to be opened in the parish of St. Ives, and it is difficult to see how a repetition of the act of destruction is to be avoided. Nearly all the streams in the West of England are liable to be thus abused, for the arsenic discharged from the mines in their vicinity almost always finds its way into the water sooner or later, in spite of all that is done to divert its course. And every time the fish are thus destroyed the people of the West cry out to Heaven for vengeance; but as yet their cry has not been heard, or at least it has not been answered.

"Thou shalt not tickle trout." This is a commandment only too little known, but lately reaffirmed, with penalties imposed on the offenders, in consequence of a case occurring in the West Riding of Yorkshire, whence it was carried, because of some refinements, to superior courts. The refinements were in the fact that the fish so "tickled"—that is, taken out by hand—were found lying gasping on the polluted water's surface. The defence apparently was that they had been taken out to give a better chance to those that were left; but since there was evidence that this motive was at least mixed with the motive of giving a fish dinner to the ticklers, the defence was deemed a little "thin." Had the ticklers shown clearer evidence of altruism by putting the fish into purer waters, the case would have gone differently. But, refinements apart, it is very well that people should know that it is penal to take trout by the hand. The mechanism and angling contrivances by which alone it is legal to take salmon were defined by statute a quarter of a century or more ago, and a few years later its provisions were extended to protect trout and char. Knowledge of this fact, that "Thou shalt not tickle trout" is a commandment for whose breach the law has penalties, should be useful in strengthening the hands of proprietors and also in weakening the tickling hands of the law-breakers—generally schoolboys, but often folk who ought to be old enough to know better than to break the law.

One has lately passed away who deserves to be kept in green remembrance by the many anglers that find sport and recreation on the Thames and its tributaries, Mr. W. H. Brougham, for very many years secretary of the Thames Angling Preservation Society. He was indefatigable in working for the best interests of the angling community, checking unlicensed poaching and the killing of under-sized fish. He retired from the secretaryship of the society some two years ago, and his services were so fully appreciated that he was presented, on his retirement, with a substantial cheque in token of gratitude and recognition.

Although the sympathies of COUNTRY LIFE are cosmopolitan, or at any rate pan-Britannic, so that it can look with equal eye on the success of England, Ireland, Scotland, or Wales in the football field, the success of England at Richmond in the match against Ireland is particularly welcome. This is written for purely personal reasons, and at the same time without personal knowledge of any player engaged on either side. The phrase sounds paradoxical, but it is not so really. Before the match against Ireland the English pack was thoroughly reorganised, and recruits were brought in from exactly those quarters of athleticism in the prosperity of which the readers of COUNTRY LIFE are—we suspect—most keenly interested. The new men came from Oxford and Cambridge, and the new men by their spirited play won the game.

Hale, the professional cyclist, who is endeavouring to ride, and hitherto endeavouring with good success to ride, 100 miles a day every day for a year, Sundays excepted, must have found himself badly bothered by the snowfall. Since winter threatened he has chosen the West of England, Devon and Cornwall, as his arena, but even there they have not been free of snow. It will be interesting to hear how he fares. Hitherto he has done his task, now more than half completed, easily enough, the Sunday rest giving him a great advantage over a former cyclist who essayed the 100 miles a day for a year without the seventh day of rest—and failed. Hale will undoubtedly succeed unless the snow or illness stops him; indeed, it is not such a very big task, barring the snow. But it is necessary to bar that. Perhaps the experience of the last two winters inclined Hale, who, we believe, is an American, to discredit the possibility of English snow. But, after all, the Christmas cards have justified themselves, though the snow did not come precisely at Christmastide.

A good old cricketer is gone in "Charlie" Farr, lately dead at the considerable age of seventy-four. It is naturally very many years since Farr took an active part in first-class cricket. By proxy, so to say, he continued to take part in it, for he was coach at several public schools and at one of the Oxford colleges after he gave up playing the game, so that many, perhaps without suspecting it, exhibited his style at second hand. He is another link with a past school of cricketers gone.

There is nothing new under the sun. For example, we see it stated that the Russian papers of to-day find it convenient to employ a nominal editor, whose sole business it is to go to prison when the real editor of the paper commits an offence against the stringent Press laws. The same practice, we are informed, is honoured or dishonoured in Japan, and used to prevail in Germany, where the editor was also expected to be a good swordsman, and had need to be. It would certainly be useful in France, where journalists are frequently compelled to support their opinions with their swords, although it is true that the encounters are usually bloodless. But the idea is American, and originated in the Western States. One American humourist, Mark Twain, if memory serves correctly, has a beautiful account of such an editor, and of his description of himself as the editor "who does the heavy business."

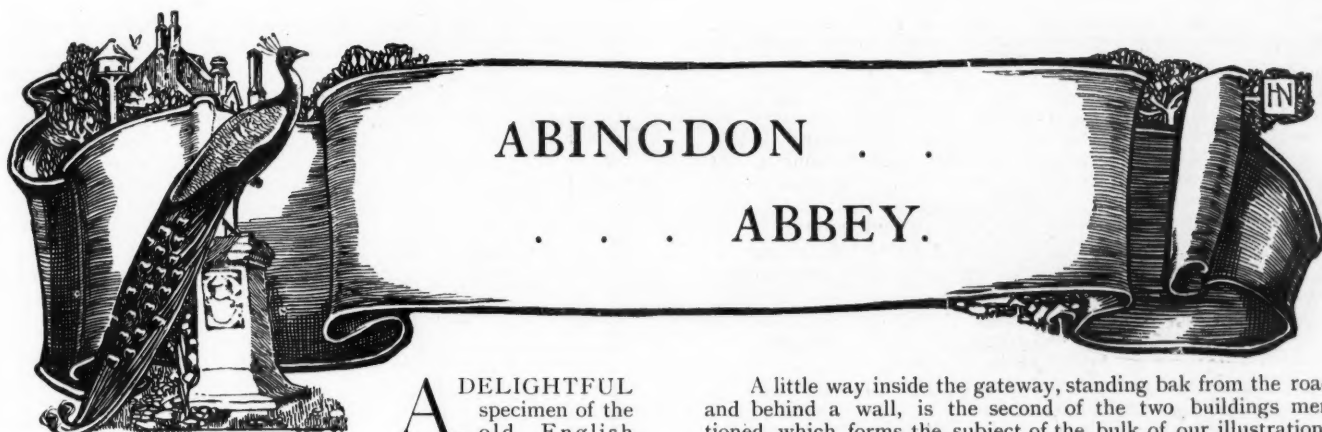
The snowfall of early February, heavy and general throughout the country, ought to remove all fear of any severe lack of water in the coming summer such as we have suffered in the two summers preceding. In the Southern Counties, moreover, the snow has behaved in the ideally best manner, falling and thawing, and then falling again, with the thermometer always just about the freezing mark. This manner, however, that is ideal for filling the water-holding strata of the earth also achieves the ideal of all that is disagreeable for getting about over the surface of the ground. But if it will give us plenty to drink and plenty to wash in in the coming summer we may forgive it.

A curiously abrupt stop has been put to the songs and love notes of our birds by the snow coming so short a time before St. Valentine's Day. Before its fall we heard the thrush and the skylark singing, and the stock-dove beginning its cooing notes. Now these are all hushed for a while, and almost the only note to be heard in the woods and hedgerows is the metallic tinkling of the great tit.

An error was made in our last issue in describing Shipton Court as the seat of Sir George Compton Reade. The present owner is Mr. Joseph Reade, whose father succeeded under the will of the late Sir John Chandos Reade. Debrett (edition 1900) naturally makes no mention of this, merely observing that Sir G. C. Reade of Shipton Court resides in America.

## Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is the portrait of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Albany, daughter of the Prince and Princess of Waldeck-Pyrmont, aunt of the young Queen of Holland, and sister of the Queen-Mother. Her married life was very short, for she was married to Prince Leopold, who was so well beloved at Oxford, in 1882, and she became a widow in 1884. No member of the Royal Family, except perhaps the Prince of Wales, works harder at public functions than the Duchess of Albany. Especial interest attaches to Her Royal Highness at present, owing to the fact that by the renunciation of Prince Arthur of Connaught, her eldest son, who is named after his father, becomes heir to the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.



A DELIGHTFUL specimen of the old English town is Abingdon, with its one wide, clean, straight street, its many crooked and narrow ways, its old church by the river, and the quaint almshouse with its gabled roof and old oak porches, and its wide market-place with another church and the Guildhall looking into it. But the glory of older Abingdon, and perhaps its creative force, was its Abbey, with its memories and its charters (mostly forgeries, it is true) of Cissa and Cilla, reputed prince and princess of Sussex, and the great Ini, earliest of codifiers of English law, the conquering king of the West Saxons.

Little remains, however, of this famous Abbey. What there is of the actual monastic buildings, beyond a fantastic and modern arrangement of fragments in a garden, is concealed by the excrescences of the private residence, which to outward view is but of the day before yesterday. Only two buildings remain more or less whole, and give us some idea of the picturesqueness and importance of the Abbey itself.

The first is the great gate of the Abbey, standing back from the market-place, hemmed in by the town church of St. Nicholas on one side and the Town Hall on the other. It is a stately and graceful gateway with a chamber above it, and over the point of the main arch a statue of the crowned Virgin, to whom Abingdon Abbey was dedicated. The gateway is of the same period as, and bears a very strong family resemblance, though it is on a considerably larger scale, to, "Outer Gate" of Winchester College. Nor is that surprising, as it was probably built by Mr. William Wynford, whom Mr. Arthur Leach believes to have been the architect of Winchester College and of the nave of Winchester Cathedral. He appears in the Treasurers' accounts of Abingdon Abbey for 1375, as concerned in the "new work" of the Abbey, and receiving a stipend of £3 6s. 8d., a gown worth 18s. and 2s. 10d. for fur for it, while £6 13s. 4d. was still due to him at the end of the year. From this the large yearly pay of £10 (as much as that of the head-master of Winchester) is to be inferred.



J. Vasey.

THE GREAT GATE.

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A little way inside the gateway, standing back from the road, and behind a wall, is the second of the two buildings mentioned, which forms the subject of the bulk of our illustrations. A very curious building it is, and with a very curious history, which gives quite a different idea of the work done by Abbeys from that usually presented by writers of the gushing order.

The building in question is nothing more nor less than an inn, the New Inn, as it is called in the accounts of various officers of the Abbey in the fifteenth century.

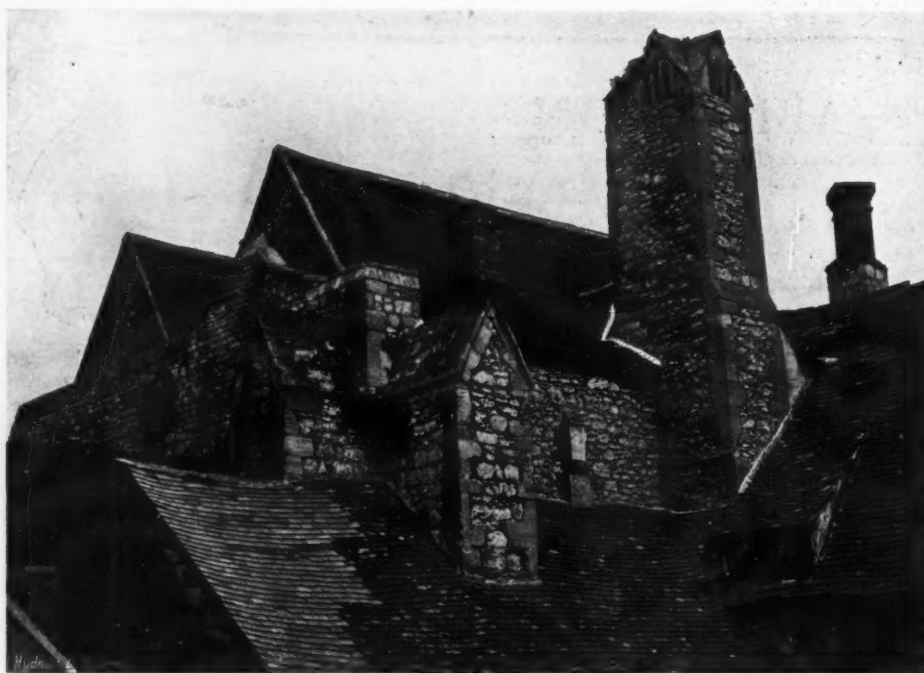
We are always being told by "the praisers of past times" how the abbeys and other religious houses did so much for the relief



J. Vasey. FIRE-PLACE IN PRIOR'S CHAMBER. Copyright

of the poor, the entertainment of travellers, and other forms of charity. No doubt in early times the monasteries did serve as inns for travellers, though probably, as at St. Bernard's now, some payment was expected for the entertainment given.

At Abingdon we have an extremely interesting account of the duties of the various officers of the Abbey, written in the early part of the thirteenth century. The Hospitaller or Ostler, as he was called, was "to be magnificent, officious in hospitality, not given to tale bearing, or changing his skin, a good talker, a clever arguer, discreet in silence, and ready to learn." In those times as soon as a guest arrived he was taken into church to ask pardon for any sins committed on his journey. He was then conducted to the parlour, where he was greeted with a Benedicite, by the abbot or chief person present, and then went to the refectory to have a drink. He had to attend matins, which, as it was at dawn or the middle of the night, was rather a terrible penalty for a free night. At meal times he was taken to the refectory and given a place according to his rank. He was allowed to stay only for two nights. It is not quite clear where he slept, but presumably in a house specially assigned for guests.



J. Vasey.

## THE CHIMNEY STACK.

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The guest house is mentioned as being repaired as part of the "old work" in 1375. In the accounts for 1396 the whole expense on guests, out of an income of over £2,000 a year, was only 54s. 4d., or a trifle over a shilling a week. Nor can any great number of poor travellers have been expected. It is a quaint touch, which reminds one of the commercial traveller of to-day, that the "Ostler" kept three pair of the best old slippers for those guests who had not got any.

The present "Inn" was added, as part of the "new work" of the Abbey, between 1396 and 1415, when a tiler was paid for mending a hole in the roof, and a rent is paid for a yard enclosed in the "new inn." In 1436 there occurs an item of "40s. for default of rent of the new inn, this year, because it is empty," which looks as if the monks had washed their hands of their guests, and left them to the tender mercies of an inn-keeper, who paid a rent for the privilege. One wonders whether it was a "tied" house and the inn-keeper had to use the convent beer supplied by the Cellarer. Perhaps—we shudder to suggest it—he even had to use the convent wine—wine made by and in the convent. We hear often of the convent vineyard, and as late as 1388 the inventory of the Gardener of the convent included "a vat for making wine and cider." The poor guests would have needed experiments with the wonderful collection of drugs kept by the Infirmary—cassia and scammony, saxifrage and fleabane, tamarinds and cubebs, and penidras, whatever they may be—if they partook too freely of the Abingdon vintage.

The inn itself was a two storey building, the upper floor, in which the guests slept, being approached by an outside staircase, like a Swiss cottage. This upper floor was divided by wooden partitions, now destroyed, into a series of separate cubicles, entered from a gallery open to the air, which our illustration shows very well. This arrangement, well calculated to promote ventilation, may still be seen in some old inns in the country. Sam Weller's hostelry, the White Hart in the Borough, was a good specimen of this kind of thing. Occasionally in these degenerate days the passage is itself glazed. The ventilation was sorely needed. As the monks' dormitory and refectory were only swept out once a year, while the jugs were scoured ten times, and the monks had baths three times in a whole year, the odour of sanctity must have required a good deal of tempering by the winds of heaven.

That Mr. William Wynford and his predecessors knew how to build solidly, when solidity was needed, the interior and exterior views we present, one of the chimney-piece and fire-place in the

so-called Prior's lodging, and the other of a chimney stack, are proof enough. Little fear need have been felt by the Abingdonians of that frequent cause of fire in houses of the last and present century—a chimney on fire or the charring of the wood round the fire-place.

## The River in Frost.

THERE is no time in the country which is more delightful to the sportsman with shooting proclivities than when a good old-fashioned hard frost sets in, accompanied by a fall of a couple of inches or so of snow. Then, if he has a river near him which is fed by springs and brooks, and is in a neighbourhood where duck are plentiful, he is indeed a happy and much-to-be-envied man! Of all my sporting recollections there are none that I can look back upon with more pleasure than the good old days in the County Tipperary when the iron grip of King Frost sealed up the wide waters of Lough Derg, and drove the ducks, in their various varieties, up the tributary rivers which unite in swelling the volume of the "lordly Shannon" and its chain of noble lakes. It may be a bit of a trial to vacate the cosy warmth of the blankets for the cold grey bitterness of a foggy January morning, with the thermometer marking over 20deg. of frost; but it is like taking a plunge into a cold bath, and once up and out the worst is over. The morning is calm and still, and the woolly rime with which every twig and blade of grass is feathered is glittering in the moonlight yet, though a faint glow in the east warns the queen of night that she must soon pale before her lord and master, old Sol. Sad experience has taught us that if we hope to have a successful duck-hunt we must be down by the river at or before daybreak. It often seemed to me, in my young days, that a very great mistake was made in not manufacturing rivers with only one bank, and that I alone should have the right of shooting that. Nothing earthly is more aggravating than to find, after getting up at a most unreasonable hour, and suffering all sorts of discomfort to secure the first run down the river, that some fiend has just forestalled you by some five or ten minutes, and you can hear him "Bang, banging!" away down a few hundred yards, just where you know your very pet spots lie. If you stole upon that fellow and shot him, I don't think that any proper-minded set of jurymen—especially if they had themselves suffered like pangs of disappointment—would return any verdict but that of "justifiable homicide."

We have about half a mile to tramp to our river. On our way we have to stumble across a turnip field on which the roots have been left. The few leaves have been frozen away to nothing, and the turnips themselves are like so



J. Vasey.

## THE GUEST HOUSE, UPPER FLOOR.

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many stones as our toes come in contact with them as we stagger over the iron ridges. A few unfortunate plovers get up with a faint plaintive cry, and wing their way to another part of the field. "Whirr!" and up springs the remnant of that fine covey of partridges which led us many a dance last October. But these are all unheeded as, with head bent down and buried as deeply as possible in the upturned collar of the coat, the gun tucked under the arm, and hands thrust far down in our pockets, we hurry down to "the river." We are in luck this morning! Our own side is all right, and in the dim, grey light we can see that the virgin snow on the opposite bank is yet unsullied by the foot of man.

"The river" is not a wide one, but in most parts is deep and sluggish flowing; and owing to its waters being almost entirely fed by springs, it rarely or ever



Vasey. ABINGDON: THE GALLERY, NEW INN. Copyright

freezes, except in little patches here and there in still nooks and corners. Long years ago a system of main drainage was carried out here, the river course deepened, the stuff taken out and thrown on the banks forming grand cover for the shooter to crouch behind. Just now, in the hard frost, the water has dwindled down to midsummer volume, the sides of the banks having fallen in in many places, and thick clumps of sedge and flaggers grow on these landslips, affording splendid shelter to all sorts of aquatic fowl. Lots of snipe and some curlews are busy along the banks, the former darting off with any amount of "Skaip, skaiping!" and the latter with their loud weird cry; but for the present they are let off unharmed, as firing at them would disturb the ducks on the river. Peeping cautiously over the bank, we take a look down stream. Away about 50 yds. off we can make out two dusky birds swimming about behind a tuft of flaggers. Noting the spot by an inequality in the bank, we make a detour and come up where we think the birds are. Stealing gently to the bank, we peep over, and to our great disgust see only a pair of water-hens, which, with a note of alarm, dive at once on catching sight of us. We are turning away with a prayer for all water-hens, when "Quack, quack!" and up spring a duck and mallard from a sheltered nook close by. As they rise straight up and poise for a second before winging their way down stream, the mallard gets the right barrel and falls with a "thud" on the opposite bank, while the duck darts away with much "quack, quacking!" evidently unharmed by the second barrel. Three teal rise close by at the report of the gun, and with short, quick flight skim away, to pitch down again a few hundred yards off. By experience we know that these pretty little ducks are "gay deceivers," and have a trick of pretending to drop precipitately into the water, when they either go skimming over the stream for some distance, or settle, and then paddle like small steam-engines down stream.

Making another detour, we come to the place where we think the teal ought to be. Looking over the bank, nothing is to be seen of them, and thinking we have made a mistake we walk up on top, when, with a chorus of quacking and splashing, up rise about a dozen ducks from the mouth of a deep spring drain where it joins the river, and with them the three teal. Blazing both barrels into "the brown" of the flock, we have the mortification of seeing the whole lot go flying off and make their course for the Shannon. Our old friends, the teal trio, do not accompany them, but, flying down a short distance, drop down again and entice us to follow them. While trying to get a shot at them we see three widgeon on the river, but they see us and go off paddling down full steam. There is nothing for it but a quick run to get before them, and, making a wide detour, we get in behind a high bank just as the trio steam past. The leading duck and mallard are shot with the right barrel, and the third bird, rising, is dropped on the opposite bank. The two birds floating down are picked up as they pass beneath a foot-stick which spans the river at a narrow spot a little lower down, and, crossing over, the third widgeon is gathered, and we are well satisfied with these two shots. While on this side we take a turn through the "Black Grove," as we are so near it. A lonely, forbidding-looking spot it is, but a place of surprises, as one never knows what may spring from its recesses. A deep spring drain runs through the grove, and in hard weather this is a favourite resort of all kinds of water-fowl. The first thing we come on is a poor starved-out heron on the look-out for even a "pinkeen" to stay the pangs of hunger. He is hardly able to flap up out of the drain, so feeble is he. The signs and tokens round the fox earth in the centre of the grove show that Mr. and Mrs. Reynard have not been keeping fast; wings, legs, and heads of birds—wild and domestic—strewn about the mouth of the earth tell us that the vulpine family have been faring sumptuously. May it do them good, and strengthen them for giving some good sport to the "Ormonds."

A brace of teal give a nice right and left as they spring up, and are both accounted for. A hare pops up out of a clump of furze at the double report,

and goes skipping off through the trees, a tempting shot, and we are glad that empty cases in both barrels make self-denial a necessity, and not a virtue. A little further on a cock is flushed from some hollies, and easily stopped as he flaps quietly across an open space.

All along the drain bank are the footprints of otters, and the tell-tale snow shows what a rambler *Lutra vulgaris* must be on a frosty night. Leaving the grove, we retrieve the mallard with which we led off in the early morning, and a friendly foot-stick lets us back to our own side again. No. 8 now takes the place of larger shot, and we pick up a few snipe in our homeward trudge.

The fascination of a river in hard frost is the glorious uncertainty of what may spring up. I remember one morning, while walking quickly along a despoiled drain, being almost electrified by a "gaggle" of over a dozen wild geese flapping up in a confused mass right into my face, and so unnerving me that I only got one out of the lot. Another bit of "glorious uncertainty" is crossing a drain, especially if the ice is covered with snow. Spring drain ice is a most treacherous thing, and to get "let in" for an early morning bath is anything but pleasant. But with these little drawbacks, a morning's duck shooting on a river such as I have described is a most enjoyable thing, and anyone who has the chance of trying should not miss it. ERIN.

## O'ER FIELD AND FURROW.

THE ground was deep enough before, but what will it be like when the snow melts? The horses are already beginning to feel the work severely, and are looking very tight, so that it was with very mixed feelings that some of us saw the snow on Saturday. I returned to my quarters on Friday night, and though London was wet and miserable there was nothing to suggest a cessation of hunting; in the country a white covering lay over the ground. The horses' feet were muffled by the snow as I drove from the station, and "I suppose, sir, you won't go to-morrow," greeted me as I went to have a look at the horses. But even if I had been able to go, the work of the week had told a good deal on the horses. A more trying day than Tuesday with the Cottismore at Loddington there has not been this season. It was only because the hunt of the day was over country very well known that some of us got to the end at all, and of those but few saw much of hounds by the way. The hounds soon found in Loddington Redditch. It is rough and difficult country about here at the best of times, and now in the course of a comparatively short hunt, which took us through Tugly and just over the border, the first horses had almost enough. It was not the boldest rider who saw most, but the man who knew the gates and the light-weights who ventured to scuttle through the holding rides at a fair pace. Generally speaking, the light-weights in Leicestershire have no great advantage over the 14st. men, but on this occasion matters were all in their favour. The wet weather has not brought us that burning scent which marked the season of 1876, when rain was as heavy as it has been this winter. The benefit of the moisture has this season been counteracted by the constant changes of temperature. Conditions of scent were more favourable when Gillson found his second fox in Skeffington, and when at length we got clear of the woodlands near Robin-a-Tip-toe, between Tilton Wood and the railway, hounds were flitting away some fields ahead towards Tilton Station. To ride hard to catch them would have been fatal, so there was nothing for it but to catch the horse by the head, stand in one's stirrups, and look for the soundest ground. It was more like the Duke of Beaufort's country when it rides deep than Leicestershire. There was snow in places, and everywhere wet, and hounds were driving on, increasing their pace or going slower, but hunting beautifully. The chase was always swinging leftwards. Not far from Lord Morton's Gorse the pack had to come to their noses, and we were getting on terms with them, when a fresh line was touched by some of the hounds, and as they threw their tongues eagerly the rest clustered to them. That was too much, and we took to the road, to find that hounds were coming back from Hungarton. Croxton Park Wednesdays always draw a good field, and because half the sportsmen of the younger generation have gone, the assemblies have lost an element of brightness and the sport some of its foremost riders. One youngster who had not long joined the Service found he was to be left behind, so he got leave of absence, packed his kit and went to South Africa, where he reported his arrival, and is now in the thick of the fighting. His youth and keenness counted against the bold stroke. Then there is Mr. A. M. Knowles, an only son and heir to a fine place, not long married, who has gone as a lieutenant (he is a captain in the Notts Hussars) with the Yeomanry. On the more cheerful side of things there is good news from Lord Robert Manners, who is with General Buller; he writes cheerfully, is well, and came out safely from the battles, where he did some good work. Then there is a son of an M.H. who enlisted in a cavalry regiment, and has already distinguished himself by helping his troop sergeant-major back when wounded. But we must stop, and return to the remains of the old hunting-box at Croxton, where Will Goodall's widow lived, and to the fish ponds in which the beautiful Duchess Mary Isabella of Rutland and the poet Crabbe used to fish. From Croxton Park to Bescaby Oaks is a frequent direction for hounds to take, so down the lane at the side, then right-handed through the gate we went. The cry of the descendants of Gambler and the sons of Dexter rings through the wood. There are two lines, but a glimpse of Capell blowing his horn and galloping on one of Sir Gilbert's first-rate hunters—think of having sixty or seventy first-class hunters to draw upon in a season like this—tells us which way to go. Hounds dash away on the line, and then before we have settled down throw up their heads. Capell catches hold of them and casts forward, but the fox was headed back. When hounds again touch the line they have to work back inch by inch through the Oaks. But old Goosey used to say, "I beg leave to say, sir, that a fox is a toddling animal." This one had "toddled" to some purpose, for he ran us out of scent. Newman's Gorse has an open earth, but a smart terrier sets the fox going. Bad luck was ours again, for the fox was headed, and came right back through the gorse and into Freeby Wood. The fox no doubt gained, and scent was but catchy, but hounds went through and out as if for Melton Spinney. But from small coverts foxes seldom run straight unless very hard pressed, and this one kept working round to the right till his head was towards Waltham Village and into Goadby. I suspect it was another fox that went to ground in the Harby Hills, a very short distance away, and near to Piper's Hole. In writing of the Belvoir country I must not forget a tribute to the memory of the late Marquess of Queensberry. He hunted in this country at one time from Barrowby when he rented the rectory. His kindly deeds and neighbourly thought for the needs and pleasures of his poorer brothers are still remembered, and the story of how he blinfolded a young horse which disliked water and rode him at a brook is told, I think, in Mr. Pinder's "Random

Recollections of the Belvoir." What a horseman could do, that the Marquess dared to attempt, and there have been in our time no more plucky riders than the late Lord Queensberry and his friend Sir Claude de Crepigny. Of his troubles and eccentricities I will not speak, but to his horsemanship, his sportsmanlike nature, and his kindly heart it is fit that some tribute should be paid. This day with the Belvoir brings me to the end of my experiences, but I will add a few words from the stable companion about the Quorn Friday. This is what he had to tell. "It was cold and wretched, and after a very pottering day I had made up my mind to come home. However, Thorpe Trussells was on the way back, and glad I was I 'stuck it out so far,' as the soldiers used to say. It was a twisting run, and as I am not a hunting correspondent you must not expect me to tell you all the places we passed. At all events, I knew Adams' Gorse when we reached it, and a beautiful line there was to Burrough Village. We galloped and jumped and enjoyed ourselves. No great pace, no point at all, but just a good pack, well handled, hunting a twisting fox with a moderate scent over a lovely country. Why should a fox go straight when he can find the best of grass to go over? At Thorpe Satchville I turned for home." The above suggests, to those who know the country, a beautiful line, from the Trussells to Burrough and back to Thorpe Satchville being the two points of the run. Not very far, of course, and I gather that the time occupied was about thirty-five minutes.

X.



ONE of the Greek philosophers—surely it was Aristotle—in an analysis of the kinds of pleasure, was at pains to draw a distinction between intellectual pleasures and those which come from sensation or touch. But as a certain preacher before the Prince of Wales, who chose for his text, "Put not your trust in princes," is said to have got out of his difficulty by saying that the Psalmist never knew our noble Prince of Wales, so it may be said here that Aristotle never saw our beautiful *Anglo-Saxon Review*, Lady Randolph Churchill's quarterly (John Lane), of which the third number lies before me. Merely to handle this "tall copy" in its vesture of smooth morocco is a pleasure of touch; the beautiful tooling of the cover, the scrolls, the Royal arms, the arabesques—these are pure pleasures that are given through the eye; and, moreover, there is a quite sufficient intellectual feast within. Yet the first article to which every reader who is a real book lover will turn is Mr. Cyril Davenport's note on the binding of the book, which is, as nearly as may be, a perfect copy of the binding of Kaderus's "Bavaria Pia," which was printed at Munich in 1628, and probably bound specially for Charles I. If so it justifies the view of those who hold that whatsoever at any time may have been said against Charles, his artistic taste was always unexceptionable. In fact the volume is a casket.

What does the casket contain? In the first place, six engraved portraits, very well reproduced of course, of which the most interesting are Denon's Napoleon, from the collection of Lord Ribblesdale, and Miss Amelia Curran's Shelley, from the National Portrait Gallery. Then there is literature, all of it quite good, but much of it of the kind that may be bought for half-a-crown or less in some of the old-established reviews. That, if the truth must be told, is not what one turns to first in a volume of so apologetic a character. Mr. Stephen Crane on "War Memories," Mr. David Hannay on "Our Sea Fights with the Dutch," Mr. Spenser Wilkinson on "The Art of Going to War," Mr. Lionel Phillips on "Past and Future in South Africa," Mr. Sidney Low on "Some Battle-pieces"—all these things are stock "review" subjects, and all of them, with the exception of Mr. Stephen Crane's essay, which I cannot like,

are treated in the most meritorious manner and something more by men who are at the head of their profession. But it is to the out-of-the-way pieces, to those which promise to be of permanent value or interest—they are not quite the same thing—that one turns instinctively. The first of these (passing by some letters of George Canning which are a trifle disappointing) is Mr. W. H. Mallock's Fitzgeraldian-Omarian version of selected portions of "Lucretius." It is not Fitzgerald, by a long way; more liberties are taken with metre than one quite likes; but it is none the less an exceedingly clever and even a beautiful exercise, containing some fine quatrains, of which I venture to extract two:

"Where is the coolness when no cool winds blow?  
Where is the music when the lute lies low?  
Are not the redness and the red rose one,  
And the snow's whiteness one thing with the snow?"

"Tissue by tissue to a soul it grows,  
As leaf by leaf the rose becomes the rose.  
Tissue from tissue rots; and, as the sun  
Goes from the bubbles when they burst, it goes."

Very clever and quite in his best and brightest manner is Mr. Traill's playful piece, "The Unflinching Realist"; Dr. Garnett on "Paolo and Francesca" is learned, discriminating, and just; Mr. G. R. Askwith's notes on Venezuela Arbitration are important and worthy to be put on record. But the gem of the volume, to my mind, is Miss Gertrude Atherton's "Ta'bot of Ursula," a brief story of Californian life—not quite the Californian life of to-day—which has a strange pathos and truth in it.

Sad to say, the *Fortnightly* is a trifle heavy. "The Dutch Church and the Boers," "The War Office," "The Lambeth Decision," "Russia and Morocco," "Procrastination and Parsimony" (we can all guess the reference), "The New Education Office, etc.," "The Ruskin Hall Movement"—all these things are important, but they make a somewhat solid meal. On the other hand, Professor Herford's rendering of a scene from Ibsen's "Love's Comedy" gives variety, an article on the "English Terence" (Cumberland) has removed some of my ignorance without weariness, and Mr. Baillie Grohman has an article on "British and Foreign Rifle Shooting," which may be summed up very shortly. (1) He argues from the only two standing competitions at Bisley, for which very few entries are commonly made, that English marksmen shoot very badly in the standing position, which nobody ever denied. (2) He says that Continental and American shots are better at 200 yds. standing, partly because they practise it more, partly because they use lighter triggers. (3) That therefore we ought to use lighter triggers. Upon this last point he will not be likely to find the military with him, which will not distress him much. The real question is whether the shooting at these very close ranges is likely to be of any practical value in warfare; for the men defending a position are not likely to require it, and to those that are attacking the position it is too terribly costly. But then advances may be necessary through standing corn, as I fancy at Waterloo, and, in any case, I have long been of opinion that the standing position at Bisley is neglected unduly.

The February number of the *Strand* is, as usual, a bright and varied budget. One article, Mr. Lucy's "From Behind the Speaker's Chair," is very striking, for, if the mantle of prophecy has fallen upon Mr. Lucy's shoulders, we shall all be highly delighted. "Early in the present session Lord Salisbury in the one house, and Mr. Arthur Balfour in the other, will be able to announce a peace not only with honour but with substantial profit." Well, let us hope so. An article on Sir Charles Isham's wonderful combination of rock garden and dolls' house will be interesting to readers of COUNTRY LIFE.

Books to order from the library:

"Southern Arabia." Theodore and Mrs. Bent. (Smith, Elder.)  
"Village Life in China." Professor A. H. Smith. (Oliphant.)  
"The Lost Continent." Cutcliffe Hyne. (Hutchinson.)  
"Life of the Duchess of Teck." C. Kinloch Cooke. (Murray.)  
"Oona." Rosa Mulholland (Lady Gilbert). (Richards.)  
"One Queen Triumphant." Frank Matheu. (Lane.) LOOKER-ON.

## THE BEST OF EVERYTHING.



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

CHURLISH.

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THE ambition of having the best of everything, according to its kind, is a good deal more than an amiable weakness or last infirmity of noble minds, for it is a great incentive and means to raising the standard of the thing or creature of that kind. This is the function that is performed by the giving of prizes in shows, where the best are to be seen, the best points in each kind to be studied and compared, to the end that we may arrive at such a degree of perfection as is possible in a finite and imperfect world.

And in this respect no owner of a fine country place can reasonably be expected to do much more than has been done by Lord Hopetoun, even if all that he has done were adequately expressed by these few illustrations. He has done a great deal more than this, but probably few, even of those who have equal opportunities, could show so many creatures of championship perfection in so many and so various kinds as are portrayed here. This fine harrier, CHURLISH, took the champion prize at the big Peterborough



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FIONA BERESFORD.

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show. The Lothians of Scotland, where Lord Hopetoun lives, is one of the few regions where the hare still survives in any numbers, and he has good sport with his harrier pack. Of the same excellence, according to her kind, is this lovely cow, FIONA BERESFORD, who took the first prize at the Highland Agricultural Society's Show, and must be judged a very perfect beauty even from the illustration by all who know and admire the points of cattle, and by all who, without knowledge of their special points, can see the beauty of the little deer-like head, fine eyes, and delicate limbs. And then there are the Shetland ponies. All the family of Hope, of which Lord Hopetoun is the head, seem to take the keenest interest in these jolly little beasts, for not only are there ponies of this breed in its highest perfection at Lord Hopetoun's own place, but two of his sisters have a farm at Edenbridge, in Kent, where they make the breeding of Shetland ponies a chief feature. The ponies seem to fare very well there, though so far removed from the salt breezes of their home air, and set down to batten on fat lowland pastures. The grazing at Lord Hopetoun's Lothian home is, likely enough, no less rich than in Southern Kent, for no land in Great Britain is richer than some of this Lothian land, which will readily let at £5 the acre now, even in these days of depression of agriculture. Of course, the feeding that might be ideal for the cows, the milk-producers, might not be equally good for a hardy breed of ponies not used to such fat nourishment. But all seem to thrive equally, and the ponies make a finer show of crest and condition than we see in their native islands. This little fellow, MAGICIAN, is a wonder of equine strength and symmetry—a pocket Hercules. The Shelties are charming little beasts, and make delightful pets—a Shetland foal seems such a tiny thing when one lifts it in one's arms, exciting apprehensive whinnies on the part of the anxious mother—but their actual use, except for children's riding, or the base purposes of working in the pits—to which underground life one would not readily condemn them—is not very apparent. That, however, is the affair solely of the owner and the breeder. Our business is only to record the merit of having the best, the very best, that this or any other breed is capable of developing, and therein Lord Hopetoun and his sisters have succeeded perhaps better than any one else, especially since the sale and dispersal of Lord Londonderry's herd.

A like hypercriticism might apply to the champion Churlish, there is no absolute necessity for the existence of the harrier. This is a view of the "currant

jelly dogs" that Mr. Jorrock—we had almost written "the late Mr. Jorrock," but is he not immortal?—would endorse readily, while he would contest with vehemence a similar statement made relative to the foxhound, the "ound" *par excellence*. Yet in every class we fail not to admire perfection, and the "currant jelly dogs," and even the pack of BEAGLE PUPPIES, perhaps justify their existence as fully as the foxhound.

But in any case not even the most jealous hypercriticism can have an exception to take to the harmless and absolutely necessary dairy cow. The importance of bringing our stock of useful domestic creatures to the highest possible point cannot be disregarded, and for this reason alone every winner of a prize at our shows deserves not only the prize that he wins, but much gratitude in addition thereto. Time was when excellence in points that counted on the show bench did not mean the same as any excellence in the points practically useful to the farmer, but that foolish time has passed, and there is no longer this difference between points useful in the dairy and the butcher's shop and those that win the prizes.

No reasonable man can doubt that this is as it should be, and while such reason guides the decision of the judges, we must always be grateful to those exhibitors who, like Lord Hopetoun, help to raise the standard of the classes in which they compete.

## RIDING TO HOUNDS.

ALTHOUGH the past twenty years have witnessed a great increase in the number of men who hunt, the percentage of those who may be termed first-class to hounds has certainly not risen, and has in all probability fallen. Out of an average field of 150 horsemen, it would usually be a matter of extreme difficulty to pick out six that might be regarded justly as finished riders over a country. To the tyro the foregoing statement may come possibly as a surprise; but the initiated know, on the other hand, that to become a good man to hounds a sportsman must possess those many good qualities which are seldom found together in one individual. The art of riding across country—and an art it is in every sense of the word—can only be acquired, even by one adapted by nature for this purpose, after many years of practice commenced in early youth. It may be as well here to explain what we mean by the term "a good man to hounds," an expression that we so often hear wrongly applied even in the hunting field. We should understand it to refer to one who, providing he was properly mounted, could take a line of his own, and keep with hounds over any country that was fairly well known to him. There is all the difference in the world between showing the way and following some one else. In the first case, a real professor of the art is required; while in the latter the second, or even the third-rate, amateur suffices. Some men seem to be able to



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BEAGLE PUPPIES.

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get to hounds without a lead even on inferior horses, while others, possessed of that wonderful instinct called "an eye for a country," appear to be in no way inconvenienced when riding over a strange district; but these are the *creme de la creme* of the hunting field. Few of us, indeed, can hope to attain such proficiency as this, but still those amongst us who possess the necessary physical qualifications, and can afford to buy good hunters, should be able, by practice and close observation, to reach a high degree of excellence in this difficult art. Nerve is perhaps the most important factor in helping a man to get across

country, and it is, alas! the most difficult to obtain, for Nature alone can provide this important attribute. It can, however, to a certain extent be developed by doing things that require nerve, but every care must be taken to provide against mishap, for a bad accident will often irretrievably ruin one's nerve.

A first-flight man must be a good horseman, otherwise he will speedily be thrown out by unduly distressing his horse, or perhaps by receiving a severe fall. Nature, again, has much to do in the making of a perfect horseman, for some men are so shaped that they can never hope "to witch the world with noble horsemanship." For instance, if a man has short round thighs he will in all probability lack a good seat, and without this he can scarcely hope to possess good hands, for the latter depend on the former to a far greater extent than is generally supposed. Although seat and hands are for the most part given or withheld at birth, yet both can be greatly improved by constant practice under an experienced instructor, especially when the pupil is still in his teens.

Before a man can hope to cut out the work for others, he must possess a great knowledge of hunting. In order to obtain this, careful observation is necessary, so that he may anticipate, as it were, the movement of hounds. We have often noticed some keen follower of the chase riding apparently in quite a different direction to that taken by hounds, and presently we see the pack turn



C. Ridd, Wishaw, N.B.

THE BEST OF EVERYTHING: MAGICIAN.

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part of the fox will make them lose their bearings. On the other hand, some individuals never seem to acquire a good knowledge of any one country, even when they have hunted in it for years. They get pounded at the same fences season after season, while prominent landmarks are entirely forgotten. We have known men who were utterly ignorant of their whereabouts when they were only a few miles from home. The best way to acquire a thorough knowledge of a country is to purchase the Ordnance Survey maps of the district in which one hunts, and then in the field to carefully take note of the prominent features of the landscape, so that when one reaches home the day's work may be traced out on the maps.

In order that a man may ride in the first flight, good horses are necessary; in fact, if one attempts to show the way on an under-bred hunter, or one insufficiently trained, numerous heavy falls will be the result, and in consequence a complete loss of nerve will follow in most cases. In conclusion, we may say that a man can never hope to shine in the hunting field unless he devotes a great deal of time and trouble to the art of riding to hounds; but no one who is prepared to do this, and has the necessary physical qualifications, should despair of winning that much-coveted distinction of being termed by his fellows "a good man to hounds."

C. E. A. L. R.

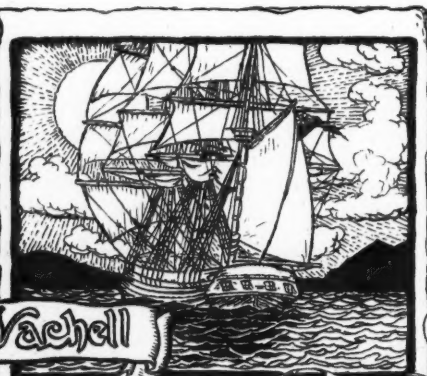
## John Charity

A Romance of Yesterday

Containing certain adventures and love passages in Alta California of John Charity, yeoman of Cranberry Orcas in the County of Hampshire, England as set down by himself.

Edited by

Horace Amesley Vachell



Rackham. Est. 1899.

### CHAPTER VI.

EL SENOR GOBERNADOR—JUAN BAUTISTA ALVARADO.

HIS Excellency received me in a small room, very plainly furnished. In the centre of it stood a handsome mahogany table; upon this were an inkstand, some paper and quill pens, and a rough map of Alta California. The Governor offered me a cigar, lit one himself—he was ever a great smoker—waved me to a chair, sat down, and, fixing his fine rather melancholy eyes upon my face, began to speak slowly in Spanish.

"My friend Larkin tells me that you want land—a grant." I bowed.

"I should be glad, señor, to give you and your friends as many leagues as you please, for we need just such people—how badly, perhaps I alone know."

He paused as if embarrassed; then he rose from his chair. Later I discovered that Alvarado could never express himself fluently when sitting. A man of action, he loved to talk pacing up and down, emphasising his periods with gestures.

"The Señora Valencia," he said, abruptly, "is extraordinarily beautiful, too beautiful."

I could not help smiling. Doubtless Alvarado held with Thucydides that the less that is seen and heard of a woman the better. I explained to him that Courtenay owned a small

interest in the cargo of the Heron, and that, for the present, he would accompany Jaynes upon his trips up and down the coast.

"Jaynes sails for Santa Barbara within a few days. It is certain that your friends go with him?"

"Quite certain, your Excellency."

He shrugged his shoulders. Then he said, quietly: "My signature to a deed at this moment might be called in question hereafter. Carlos Carrillo is the Governor of Alta California to-day."

"But to-morrow, señor—?"

"To-morrow. Ah! *Manana—quien sabe?*"

"One may guess," said I.

"Tut!" said Alvarado, smiling. "Fortune is fickle. See here, señor, you are a young man—so am I; neither of us can afford to make mistakes. I will be entirely frank with you, for you are honest and can serve me—if you will?" I expect Castro any minute. He was at San José last night; he will be here this morning. I have just learned that nothing can prevent war. Castro will march south at once, and I shall follow. Meantime I must find a friend—he emphasised the word friend—"who will accompany Father Quijas to my uncle's house at Sonoma, and confer with him at length upon the situation. None will suspect the nature of your mission. You will bring me a message from my uncle—a verbal message. You perceive, señor, that I trust you."

Now a minute before I had no intention of pledging myself. Yet his question demanded an answer, and on that answer depended much, so much, indeed, that an older and wiser man would surely have hesitated. I was then (as now) a hero-worshipper. So I replied, boldly: "Your Excellency can command me."

He eyed me keenly.

"Have you talked with Soto, señor?"

"He has talked to me," I replied.

"Ah! he is a fox, a coyote. We have many coyotes in Alta California."

At this moment Castro clanked into the room, and was warmly greeted by the Governor. He was considered at that time to be the handsomest and strongest man north of Point Conception. Lacking the breeding of Alvarado, he looked every inch a soldier: a soldier of fortune, perhaps, rough and ready, prepared to fight, drink, or make love to a pretty woman at an instant's notice. He was very tall, very broad, and very dark. Beneath his curling black mustachios were a pair of red sensual lips. The chin was square and massive. The brows overhung large finely-formed eyes. The neck was the neck of a gladiator. He glanced at me somewhat superciliously, but Alvarado introduced me and added, kindly: "You can speak freely. This gentleman is my friend."

"Then he is the friend of José Castro. When we have taught these dogs of *abajenos* a lesson I shall be at your service, señor. What news, Bautista?"

"Estudilla has sent Pio Pico, with men and ammunition, from San Diego to Los Angeles."

Castro's great laugh rang out.

"Pio Pico! Ah, *que necio*!"

Then he turned to me familiarly and took my arm.

"Caballero," he said, still laughing immoderately, "I must tell you a story about Pio Pico. It was when he was head of the Diputación—"

"José," said Alvarado, in a tone that enforced obedience, "no stories, please; another time, not now. Tell me, when can you march for the South?"

"In half-an-hour, if the Señor Gobernador commands."

"We must wait a little—till we hear from uncle"—he always spoke of Vallejo as uncle; Carrillo was his cousin. "When will it be convenient for you, señor, to leave Monterey?"

"In half-an-hour," said I, repeating Castro's words, "if the Señor Gobernador commands."

Castro laughed again.

"*Dios*! You have faithful servants."

"I have friends—and enemies," replied Alvarado, thoughtfully. "To-morrow, señor, you and Father Quijas will take the road."

I bowed, and turned to leave.

"Santiago Castañeda is here," said Castro, carelessly. "His cousin Juan will occupy San Buenaventura" (one of the southern ports). "Can we depend on Santiago?"

Alvarado's deep voice reached my ears as I walked down the corridor: "His ranchos are in the north, and Magdalena is here."

At the mention of the girl's name my heart began to beat. Already, before I had clapped eyes on him, I hated the Mexican. However, for the moment I was concerned with other matters. Why had Alvarado chosen me—a stranger—as the bearer of despatches? Vanity furnished an obvious, but not an adequate, reason. Why, too, had he concerned himself with Letty's departure?

I confess that these questions troubled me but little. At last I had found a captain under whose banner I was eager to serve, and the services he might require of me whetted no apprehension. So I whistled as I crossed the plaza with its half-dozen cannons mounted on rotting carriages, and the tune that I whistled was "*Malbrouk s'en va t'en guerre*."

Both Letty and Courtenay—who were lodging not far from the Presidio—eyed me queerly when I told them that I was about to take the northern road. Courtenay laughed, and said, with meaning, that he was glad to hear it. Presently he left the room, and then Letty spoke nervously: "Dear John, you won't take any words of mine amiss?"

"Good Lord," said I, "what have I done?"

"Nothing—yet."

The pretty creature was blushing, and my own cheeks were redder than usual.

"You were never a flirt, John."

"No," said I, rather sourly.

"And you are not going to begin now, are you?"

Was she jealous? I asked myself. Who can fathom a woman's heart? I confess that my cheeks were red with anger, not with confusion. What right had she and Courtenay to indict me?

"I don't like Magdalena Estrada," she continued, nervously. "She is engaged to marry another man, and yet last night 'twas plain that she had eyes only for you."

"Because the other was not there," I retorted.

"If you really thought that was the reason, you wouldn't give it."

This shaft hit the white.

"You are right. She cares nothing for the Mexican."

"Ah!" she sighed, "do not be angry with me, dear John."

"I should think," said I, hotly, "that her condition would appeal to you; the child is being forced through political reasons into a detestable marriage."

"Detestable? I hear that her lover is charming."

"Many women have thought so, but not Magdalena."

"I have put your back up, John. Yet I spoke in your interest. Forgive me. Here is Courtenay."

My foster-brother asked for details concerning my interview with Alvarado, and his eye sparkled when I said that war had been practically declared.

"Egad!" said he; "I should like to take a hand in this quarrel myself."

"No, no!" cried timid Letty.

I told the hot head that I had reason to believe that His Excellency would be in a position to grant us many leagues of good land before the year was out.

"I'm not so sure of that," he replied. "He may not have more than six cubic feet of his own twelve months hence."

This speech was not to my liking, but I said nothing, and presently we walked together to a picnic where I found Tia Maria Luisa, and by her side the fascinating niece. The aunt pointed out to me a dashing horseman, who was about to engage in the "*colear*," the tailing of a bull, and before she whispered his name instinct told me that I was looking upon Santiago Castañeda. He had a fine figure and a comely face, and he rode as only those who are cradled in the saddle can ride. We sat outside a large stone corral. In the centre of it was a young bull; at opposite sides were Soto and Castañeda. Don Miguel, I noted, anxious to distinguish himself in the eyes of the Montereyans, was playing pranks that aroused hoarse cries of admiration from the crowd of Indians and Mestizos. He vaulted on and off his horse, a big sorrel gelding, or he would lean out of the saddle as he galloped round the corral, picking up handfuls of dust that he flung into the faces of the brown-skinned boys upon the top of the wall. Magdalena's lovely eyes were sparkling.

"Ay," she murmured. "He is a caballero indeed."

Just then, at a word from Alvarado, who was riding with Narciso Estrada, two panels of the big gate were taken down, leaving an opening wide enough to permit the passage of the bull and the two horsemen. You must understand that the rules of the game forbade either man to reach for the tail till abreast of the opening, and the bull must be thrown within sixty feet of the corral. When the bull saw the pastures beyond it bolted, tail up, for liberty and a meal, and the men raced after it, one on each side: positions previously determined—so Magdalena informed me—by the drawing of straws. Soto, drawing the shorter straw, was on the right of the bull, and therefore at a disadvantage, being constrained to tail the bull with his left hand. The opening was so small that it seemed to us a miracle that the three got through without a smash; but as they shot out of the dust of the ring into the clearer atmosphere beyond, 'twas seen that Soto had the tail. With a twist of the wrist he placed it beneath his left knee. Then, slightly turning his horse, he threw the big beast, and in a second was afoot beside it, the *pella*, a piece of soft, raw hide some seven feet long, in hand. With incredible deftness he bound the bull's legs so that it could not rise, and as he bowed to the crowd, *à la espada*, a hoarse shout broke from every Latin throat, and you may be sure that the Anglo-Saxons were not dumb.

"*Virgen Santísima!*" exclaimed Magdalena. She was watching Castañeda, who, because he had failed, was ill-treating his horse; jerking its bleeding mouth with the monstrous bit that Spaniards use, and spurring it cruelly upon flanks and shoulders. I watched her curiously, knowing that cruelty to animals is not an unpardonable sin in the opinion of Latin women. Then her glance met mine, and her lips quivered with feeling. Was it pity for the horse or for herself?

When the Mexican joined us a few minutes later, Magdalena received him but coldly, and my own face was sour as I bowed in reply to his greeting. I marked his thin curling lips, his harsh and metallic laugh, the laugh of the man who laughs at and not with his friends. Meantime, Letty, as usual, was the centre of a crowd of Montereyans, and I could see Castañeda's quick upward twist of the eyebrows when his glance rested upon her fair face. Then the blood rushed into his pale cheeks.

"Who is that?" he asked, abruptly. "*Dios!* 'Tis the Englishwoman of whom they rave."

So speaking, without a word of courtesy to either Magdalena or me, he turned his back upon us, and walked straight into the middle of the group. I saw him touch the arm of a dandy in green and silver; the chatter died down; Castañeda advanced;

the introduction was made; the customary phrase followed: "At your feet, señora."

The words have ordinarily no significance. And yet there lay behind them an impassioned avowal. The men lounging near exchanged smiles. Magdalena laughed.

"You look so fierce, señor," she whispered.

"A thousand pardons."

"Nay—it becomes you," she answered, smiling.

"I go north to-morrow," I said, abruptly.

It seemed to me that a shadow flitted into her expressive eyes.

"*Ojala!* you are plotting too—no? señor. I ask you to betray no confidence. Of course you go to the comandante. Well, I—I wish that I were riding with you."

"I wish to Heaven you were," I replied, fervently.

"We will take care of your friends, but they are so popular already—"

She shrugged her shoulders as I explained that the Heron was about to weigh anchor for Santa Barbara, and raised her arched brows with a comical side glance at Master Courtenay.

Truly that youth, who had seen no ladies save his wife for nearly five months, was making up for lost time. I wondered vaguely if Lettice were jealous. Courtenay's face was so expressive, and he could turn a compliment so glibly, that my mind misgave me. I saw that his wife's eyes were a-sparkle as she listened to the exuberant nonsense of Castañeda, and that her brows contracted when she glanced at her *debonair* husband. Her cheeks, too, glowed with a deeper colour than the occasion warranted.

"They are all her slaves," sighed Magdalena.

"Yes," said I, with a shameless lack of tact, and—may be—a sigh. My pretty companion eyed me sharply.

"You envy her husband—no?"

This insinuating "no" was accompanied by a sly droop of the eyelids. And I fear I blushed, for Magdalena laughed very softly.

"*Ay de mí!* You are one of the unfortunates?"

"Not I, señorita. I envy no man when I am sitting beside you."

"You say so. Ah, but—"

This Spanish trick of completing a sentence with the eyes has amazing witchery.

"I say it, and I mean it, dear señorita."

Lest the reader should accuse me of inaccuracy, I hasten to add that I did mean it. The child, for so I regarded her, had excited in me the warmest interest and pity.

Magdalena blushed beneath my eyes, and looked uneasily at Castañeda.

"*Ojala!*" she murmured. "You are much too bold."

Possibly others thought so too, for the good aunt played the dueña, and not another word save "adios" did I exchange with Magdalena. Presently I took my leave and hunted up Quijas, who was busy with preparations for our journey. He begged me to leave everything to him, and showed me a huge saddle and accoutrements set aside for my use. One of the officers gave me a *cuerpo de gamusa*, a sort of sack coat made of many thicknesses of antelope's skin, thick enough to turn a sabre cut, and some *armillas*, which covered the thighs and were quite waterproof. A cavalry soldier's carbine was offered me, but I refused it, saying that my sword and pistols would surely prove sufficient.

"Besides," said I to Quijas, "we are not going to war, but on a friendly visit to Vallejo."

"'Tis well to be prepared," said the jolly priest. "We might come across some Indians; they are giving the comandante a deal of trouble. Can you use a sword, my son?"

"Tolerably well," said I; and the talk falling upon weapons, he took me into a rough guard-room, and discoursed volubly upon schools and methods of fence. Soto was present and an *alférez* of the Presidio, who was loud in praise of the sabre. Some foils were hung upon the wall, but the lieutenant said they were rarely used by Californians. As we chatted, Castañeda and Courtenay entered, and the former was effusively greeted by Don Miguel; the *alférez*, I perceived, bowed coldly, and shortly after bade us good evening, pleading duty as an excuse for leaving us.

"Señor Castañeda," said Soto to me, "is expert with the foils. Will you try a bout, gentlemen?"

The sneer upon the Mexican's face annoyed me.

"If the señor will give me a lesson," said I, "I shall be most grateful."

The light was failing, but Castañeda bowed politely, and in less than five minutes we were hard at it. He fenced well after the Spanish fashion, whereas I had been trained by Angelo, in the modern French school—in a word, I had him at my mercy. When I had touched him several times, he flung down his foil and called for sabres, and once more we faced each other. I saw that he was angry and mortified, and, perhaps, being a very young man, I showed my sense of superiority too plainly. However, with the change of weapons I soon discovered that the

Don was at least my equal, if not my master. Three times in succession he touched me on the arm, using a peculiar feint followed by a flicking cut very difficult to parry. As the light grew worse every minute, I bowed and expressed myself satisfied.

"The honours," said Courtenay, "are even."

Castañeda complimented me on my skill, and I followed suit. Then he and Soto strolled away.

"He can beat you with the sabre," said Courtenay.

"Not he," said Father Quijas. "I can teach you to guard that cut. Quick, before it is dark."

The padre stripped off his frock, and picked up the sabre as if he loved it. I remembered that he had been in his youth a *soldado distinguido*.

"There!" he cried. "See—a mere trick, a turn of the wrist; drop your point—so! Again. That is better. Not so stiff! Once more. Ha, ha! Don Santiago is now your inferior, but don't let him know it."

The good padre laid down his weapon with a sigh, and confessed to a consuming thirst.

"For my sins last night," said he, "not a drop to-day has passed my lips, but come with me and we will crack a bottle of Frontignac that a friend sent me. The thought of it has tormented me since sunrise."

So we strolled to the priest's cell and finished the bottle that had come, indeed, out of the hold of the Heron. Quijas said that Alvarado had spoken of me most handsomely, and commended me warmly to his uncle in a letter that, even now, lay against the friar's broad chest.

"Your fortune is made, my son," said he. "Alvarado will die, perhaps, a poor man, but he will see to it that his friends become rich. *Caramba!* not a drop is left of the good French wine."

Courtenay said that he could hunt up old Mark, and find another bottle and another friend. This we did, and then went aboard for my pistols, that were vastly admired by Quijas. Jaynes added to our kit a big case bottle of cognac, and bade me take charge of it. I knew that the sly rascal was desperately anxious to renew acquaintance with the fair Barbareña, the cousin of Mrs. Ben Buston, with a cultivated taste for ancient mariners. We rallied him upon the subject of matrimony, and Father Quijas undertook at a more fitting time to baptise a most unregenerate sinner, an offer peremptorily declined.

"Juanito," said old Mark, who called Alvarado to his face Señor Gobernador, "will grant me a dispensation."

Father Quijas frowned, and for the first time I had a taste of his quality as a priest.

"My friend," he said gravely, "you have touched upon a serious matter. His Excellency has been under the ban of Holy Church ('twas for reading Télémaque when a youth), and he will not lightly offend again. A marriage between a heretic and a Catholic is no marriage—in my eyes."

He spoke soberly, in a heavy, mule-like fashion, but with obvious sincerity, and then Courtenay led the talk into a smoother channel. Meantime, I was considering how I could get speech with Magdalena. Quijas and I were under orders to leave Monterey at daybreak. Magdalena, so to speak, was under lock and key. I dared not visit her again, and if I did so I should infallibly fall foul of the Mexican. But see her I must and would.

Courtenay returned to the Presidio to sup with his wife, while Quijas, Jaynes, and I walked together to Larkin's. Here we found Castro and some roystering boon companions of his, great eaters and heavy drinkers. They welcomed Quijas uproariously.

"Ho, ho! Padre Quijas; wilt thou lay us all beneath the table, as thou did'st the last time we supped with thee?"

"An empty head holds liquor," retorted the friar. "Had'st thou brains, my son, in that headpiece of thine, the *aguardiente* would not so easily get possession."

I then saw plainly that Castro and his friends were about to make a wet night of it, so as soon as supper was over, and not without protest, you may be sure, I went my way, having agreed with Quijas to meet him at daybreak in the plaza.

"Caballero!" shouted Castro, "I'll wager a hundred steers that you are taking that sober face to a señorita."

"You would lose the bet," I returned, carelessly. "I have to say adieu to the Señora Valence."

"I'm sorry for you then," replied the big soldier. "I pity the man who has to take leave of the handsomest woman in Alta California."

When I found myself outside, the first thing I marked was the thickness of the fog that had floated in from the Pacific. The moon had not yet risen, and 'twas dark as pitch—none too dark, however, for my purpose. I wore a sombrero of vicuña and a heavy *manga*, and knew that I would pass for a Spaniard at a pinch. There were few men abroad as I skirted the wall of the Presidio and ascended the slope that led to the house where Courtenay lodged. The soldiers were singing over their cups, and from the ocean came the boom of the big combers as they broke with thundering salvos upon the shore.

I found Lettice diligently sewing, and to my amazement Castañeda was at her side. His presence there, dancing attendance upon a married woman, was, I knew, contrary to etiquette; but he looked a man who would ride rough-shod over the Decalogue itself, but I heard him say presently that the Estradas had pleaded fatigue as an excuse for dismissing him early.

"Is a guest in California ever dismissed?" said the innocent Lettice.

"He dismisses himself, señora, when he sees that his presence is no longer desired."

He sneered openly, and I suspected that Magdalena had afforded her betrothed but sorry entertainment. 'Twas plain that he found favour in the eyes of Lettice, for she entreated him to sing sentimental ditties, and he warbled as sweetly as a sucking dove for nearly half-an-hour. I told Courtenay to keep an eye upon him, but he laughed at me, and asked what mischief I apprehended. Having no answer pat, I replied confusedly that the fellow's face was a danger signal; and then Courtenay swore that he liked the man vastly well, and hoped to spend many pleasant hours in his company. I told him bluntly that a man's meat might prove a woman's poison, and he retorted that I was a stupid old ass, or words to that effect. It was on my lips to beg him earnestly to be guarded in his intercourse with these languishing southern beauties, and to remember that a wife's jealousy is quickly inflamed and not so quickly extinguished, but I feared that he would take such counsel amiss.

When I bade Letty good-bye she held tightly my hand. "Dear John," she whispered, "I shall miss your kind face. Must you really leave us? I—I dread somehow the days that I must pass without you. God bless you, dear cousin."

I kissed her cheek and laughed at her fears. Since I have learned to respect a woman's instinct, that amazing sixth sense withheld from men.

The time was now ripe for my adventure, and as I stepped again into the murk fog I wondered how it would end. By chance

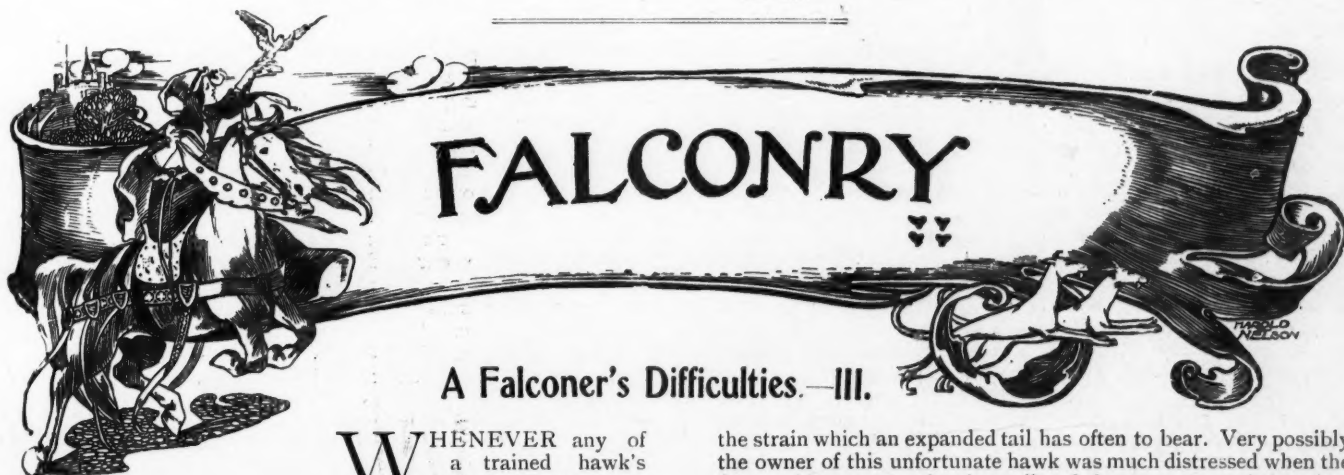
I knew that Magdalena slept in a small chamber adjoining her aunt's bedroom and beyond it. The closet—for it was nothing more—had a small window, heavily barred, that looked upon the road, but no door save the one that led into the dueña's chamber. The house was distant a couple of cable lengths from where I stood, and between it and me lay a deep gulch, that might prove a sanctuary in an hour of need. Seeing no passengers on the road, I set nimbly forth, with my sombrero pulled down about my ears and my cape drawn tight across my chin. A light glimmered in the señorita's window, but the rest of the house was black as ink against the dark grey sky. I felt like Peeping Tom of Coventry as I sneaked up to the illumined pane and peered within. The child was half undressed and sitting upon her bed; her small hands were crossed upon her petticoat; her pensive face was framed in two glorious braids of black hair that fell below her slender waist; her attitude and the pathetic droop of her mouth indicated distress tempered by resignation. It seemed an infamy to look upon her, but for my life I could not turn aside my eyes. Then, as I gazed pityingly—swearing to myself that if she needed a champion one was ready to risk his life on her behalf—she suddenly fell upon her knees, and uplifted her hands in a passion of supplication. I could not doubt that she was beseeching Heaven to send her a friend, and I vowed to accept the trust that God himself seemed to have placed in me—John Charity.

I waited till she rose from her knees, and then tapped gently upon the glass. In an instant she had caught up a *rebozo*, and entwined it around her head and shoulders; then she approached the window on tiptoe, and her eyes stared steadily into mine. Without hesitation she opened the casement and placed her graceful head close to the iron bars. "Why have you come to me?" she whispered.

"Can you ask?" said I. "God has sent you a friend; here he is."

"Madre de Dios," she sighed, "you have heard my prayers. I thank thee!"

(To be continued.)



### A Falconer's Difficulties.—III.

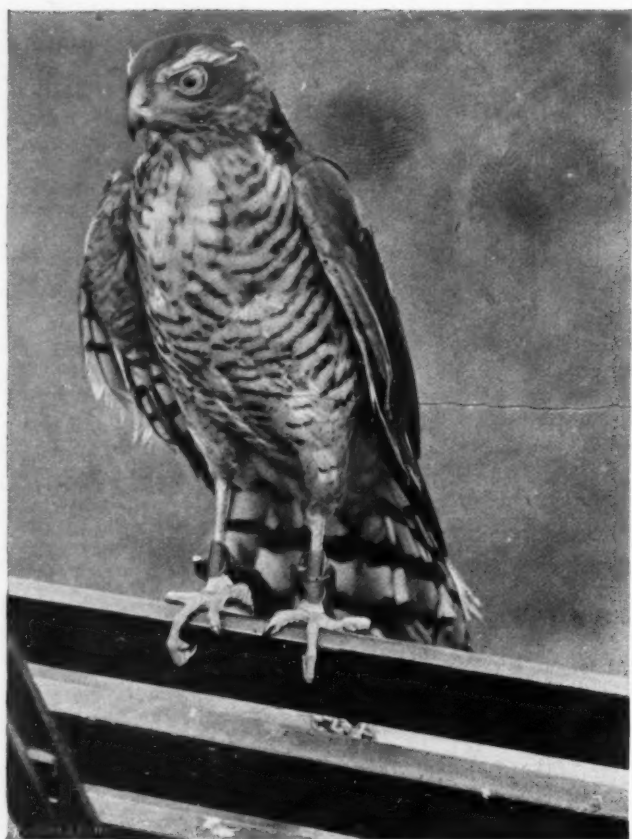
WHENEVER any of a trained hawk's flight feathers or tail feathers are broken they must be mended by the process of "imping"; and every falconer who pretends to any knowledge of his art must therefore be able to imp neatly and with success. Look at the poor wretched sparrow-hawk standing uncomfortably and indignant on the very unsuitable impromptu perch, where she has been allowed to put herself. Through the aperture between the plank, on which her feet take a cramped and incommodious hold, and the next one below it may be seen the two or three feathers in the middle of her tail which have as yet escaped injury, but which will soon share the fate of those on each side of them, and lose more or less of their tips. Each one of these side feathers, while it was intact, served as a support and protector to the others, and the breakage of one, if not immediately mended, naturally led to the snapping off of its neighbours on either side, which had need of its aid in standing

the strain which an expanded tail has often to bear. Very possibly the owner of this unfortunate hawk was much distressed when the first accident occurred to her tail and the symmetry of that fan-like appendage was unpicturesquely marred. He may at first have even thought of mending it. But the trouble of doing so may have seemed, as the moments passed, more and more formidable, whereas the injury done to the tail appeared less intolerable. After all, an inch or two taken off one feather did

not make such a world of difference. This one mishap would be a whole-some warning; and, by taking greater care, the owner would be able no doubt to save all the other feathers. A second breakage, perhaps, occurred on the other side of the tail. Well, then, the two shortened feathers, being on different sides, would balance one another, and the hawk could fly just as well after all. At the third and fourth breakages some falconers begin to lose heart, especially if they have been taking that extra care to avoid mishap which they had resolved upon. Others pluck up sufficient courage to attempt the work of



Kennedy. PEREGRINE FALCON, WINGS OUTSTRETCHED. Copyright



E. Kennedy.

SPARROW-HAWK.

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reparation. But, not having acquired perfection in this rather delicate art, they have put in the new feather crooked, or else, after seeming to fit very nicely, the impeded piece has come out, leaving the stump of the feather more hideous than it was before the repairs had been attempted. And then, unless the disappointed owner has luckily a friend, or can engage a professional, to perform the needful operation for him, he is fain to leave the poor hawk as she is, and mourn successively over the remaining feathers as they inevitably give way.

Now there is no reason in nature why amateur beginners should so often as they do incur the disgrace and reproach of keeping hawks in imperfect plumage. By doing so they proclaim to every beholder at the very first glance their incompetence and laziness. Incompetence, because no falconer gives his hawks a fair chance, or even the ghost of a fair chance, who lets them fly with their feathers out of repair. As well might a yachtsman start in a race with a hole in his mainsail or the end off his jib. Laziness, because it is really quite easy to learn how to imp. Let the beginner, before he has any hawks at all, and far less any that are in bad plumage, get a few dead pigeons, dead partridges, or what birds he will. And let him set to work and imp a whole wing and tail of one of these birds with feathers taken from another. Let him also make his own imping needles. For the big feathers he will file down straight pieces of iron wire until in the middle of each piece there are three flat sides tapering off to a point at the two tips. For the smaller feathers he can use sewing needles or bits of sewing needles, heated in the flame of a candle, and then filed down till they have a shape somewhat resembling the wire slips already described. The next step is to neatly cut off a piece of the feather to be mended, and an exactly similar piece of the other feather which is to be grafted on the mutilated stump. Then, after dipping one of the needles in vinegar, and also well moistening with it the two feathers which are to be joined, he will push one half of the needle half way into the pith of the end

which is to be stuck on, and the other half into the pith of the stump on to which it is to be grafted. Unless he is a complete "duffer," he will, before he has imped a whole tail and half-a-dozen long feathers of a wing, find that he can do the job easily and correctly enough.

It is rather hard upon beginners, no doubt, that they should always be much oftener required than the old hands to show practically their proficiency in imping. This, however, is inevitable. Experience alone can teach that constant and almost instinctive watchfulness which protects trained hawks from the danger of breaking a feather. Certainly in this case prevention is immeasurably better than cure; and every tyro should aspire at least to the possession of as much patience and prudence as will guard the plumage of his feathered friends from the common accidents which every day threaten them. To begin with, during the whole time while he is "manning" his hawk, or, in other words, familiarising her with the men, dogs, horses, and all other creatures with which she is destined to be one day allied in the chase, he can almost always tie up her tail, and often he can "brail" her wing. The first of these precautionary measures is very simple. A strong thread can be tied to the shaft of the outer feather on one side, and passed across the closed tail to the shaft of the outer feather on the other side, where it can be again tied. The twelve feathers will then form a sort of solid bundle, of which the combined strength will resist any pressure, however strong, which it may fairly be expected to encounter. Thus guaranteed against injury, the untrained hawk may be carried and stroked much more confidently, and may undergo safely her lessons in hooding, which are otherwise always very dangerous to tail feathers. A brail—which is described in all elementary hawking books—saves the tips of the wing feathers, which are apt to be suddenly dashed out as the hawk jumps off the fist, and to encounter. Look at the young peregrine in the illustration; and look with pity at her unkind fate. In the first place she is condemned to stand uneasily on a bow-perch, which, as everyone ought to know, is the fit resting-place for a short-winged hawk, and eminently unfitted for one of the nobler kind. But far more deplorable is the sight of her poor wings and tail. The left wing has lost the end of its longest—its second—feather, very probably from the very cause last above referred to. The right wing is in much sorrier plight. Not only is a big piece of the second feather gone, but the third also and the fourth have lost their tip; so that the blunt end of the wing shows like an ugly deformity, not only when she flies, but even when she stretches herself, and even when her wings are folded over her back. The right outer feather of the tail has lost nearly half its length, and the others mostly look ragged, irregular, and imperfect. Seven or eight new feathers at least are required to put this hawk in proper feather.

The young falconer who does not want to have his hawks reduced to the condition shown in these two sad pictures must, of course, not trust entirely to the brail or the tied tail to save him from such ignominy. These devices are only temporary expedients, available on special occasions, and at times of



EACH HAWK IS OFFERED A BATH.

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exceptional danger. But at all times and in all places he must beware of perils which at first he is not likely to anticipate. He must carry his hawk into such open places and in such guarded fashion that she cannot, even in the most perverse of her moods, dash the tip of her wing against any hard or sharp obstacle. He must foresee—however difficult it may be at first—that at the exact moment when he is passing through a doorway or between two carts she may jump off

his fist and just reach with the very end of her wing the hard surface which fatally splinters the longest of the most important primaries. Even a stiff hat or the hard peak of a cap will suffice to do the damage.

And here it may be remarked that very few beginners are aware how they ought to hold a hawk on the fist. Usually they begin by holding their left hand well above the elbow, about on a level with the breast, and go on doing so until either they have broken several wing feathers by reason of the hawk striking her wing violently against their face or hat, or else until they have luckily met with some more experienced man who laughs or talks them out of this bad habit. The proper place to hold the fist when a big hawk is on it is on a level with the elbow, or if anything lower, so that if she bates off she can strike with outstretched wing only the soft material of the coat of her human escort.

Our last illustration presents a pleasing likeness of Major Fisher, whose exploits as a falconer, to say nothing of his prowess as an archer, will always be recorded amongst the greatest of modern times. In the difficult flight at game—both grouse and partridges—which he preferred to any others, he did single-handed what few can ever have done before or can ever hope to do again. Though an excellent shot with the gun, and for many years the lessee of a fine moor, he cared not a jot for shooting if there was hawking to be done. On every suitable day in the season his peregrines were out, generally making good bags; and so far were these constant flights from frightening away the game, as some ignorant persons would suppose, that he never lacked sport, and finally left the moor with a great many more grouse upon it than when he first began. We are very glad to hear that some reminiscences from his facile pen are shortly to be published.

## ANIMAL EMBLEMS.

NOTHING can be more natural than that mankind, seeking to express its ideas with the aid of simile, should find material ready to its hand in the familiar birds and beasts by which it had been surrounded long before it invented language. When the attributes of a fellow-man were to be described, what more obvious and suggestive manner of description than likening him to the creature that seemed to embody the very type of the qualities that distinguished him?

From the oldest times, we may imagine, nay, we know, that certain animals passed in common parlance as the types of certain attributes. "They were stronger than lions, they were swifter than eagles," says the singer of a glorious pibroch. The Persians likened the eyes of houris to those of the graceful, great-eyed gazelle. Homer, in a homelier simile, uses the epithet "ox-eyed" as the highest that he can give the orbs of the spouse of Jove. Instances could be multiplied without ending. It is more than likely that the great and widespread "totem" worship grew out of the ascribing of the qualities of some well-known bird or beast or fish to an heroic ancestor of a tribe.

We moderns, folk of a less magnificent diction, have our own uses of the like similes—"He is brave as a lion," "strong as a horse." As an emblem of speed we have picked up a phrase more expressive even than the simile of the eagle, namely, "quick as lightning." But for the most part our most ready similes are taken from the animal creation, and generally, perhaps, to humanity's credit, in an appreciative sense, appreciative of the human attributes and appreciative, too, of the qualities of the lower animals to which we liken them. What more appropriate, for instance, than the phrase "works like a beaver"—the broad-tailed and laborious maker of dams, feller of trees, engineer of aqueducts and subaqueous, yet waterproof, dwellings? What more happy expression of maternal brightness in man or woman than the "fresh as a lark" of our

proverbial speech? No less fortunate than the likeness to the industrious beaver is the "busy as a bee," which strikes a note of alliteration always attractive to our proverb-mongers. "Proud as a peacock" illustrates the latter tendency further, and certainly the fantastic exhibition of the gorgeous tail of many eyes suggests the epithet thus associated for ever with the brave bird that served Mr. Jorrocks as his barometer. In the latter connection one naturally recalls the "cunning as a fox," that pays a deserved tribute to the intellectual qualities, at least, of the "thief of the world." "Quiet as a lamb" is a phrase that fits, despite *Punch's* picture of the gentleman uncomfortable and insecure on the back of a steed that is emulating the antics of some lambkins in a field at play.

The defects as well as the qualities are indicated in our common diction similarly. Thus "bald as a coot" explains itself at once to one who knows the generous frontal expanse that these birds wear. "Deaf as an adder" is a simile that perhaps asks for a commentary, that is supplied at once by Holy Writ telling us how she "stoppeth her ears, charm ye never so wisely."

For blindness we find several types among the animals, well chosen and the reverse. Thus "blind as a bat" is not convincing, seeing it is plain that the bat must needs be gifted with eyes of exceeding sharpness to see the insects that are its food in the dusk that it affects. Perchance the charm of alliteration

seduced the proverb-monger in this instance from the arid paths of truth. "Blind as a beetle" is an alternative that is more adequate, retaining the sweet alliteration, yet justly reminiscent of the blundering way that the beetle drives into your face as you go through the country at twilight. Yet he is not blind. Neither is the mole, which is accepted as another emblem of the defect in vision, though this error is a pardonable one, so small are the mole's eyes, and of so little use to him, as we may suppose, in his subterranean life. Aristotle, the wise man, says in his "Physics" that the mole is blind, but likely enough he took his opinion from the *Talpa Cæca* of science, the mole of Southern Europe, that carries a membrane over his eyes, with the smallest possible aperture of a window in it.

As "stupid as an owl" is obvious in its derivation, so puzzle-headed and blinking does the creature look, as we generally see it, roused into an uncongenial daylight. Yet the same is Minerva's bird, of a wonderfully solemn and wise aspect when its great eyes are roundly speculating. And of the animal eye no example is more terribly piercing than that of the hawk, and the "hawk-like eye" has appropriately become a part of our colloquial stock.

Did anyone ever catch a weasel asleep? No, nor has seen that emblem of insomnia in the state to give a chance of testing its somnolence. But that is no less true of most secretive animals. On the whole, the similes seem to be justified.

"Greedy as a pig," "obstinate as a mule," "sulky as a bear"—this class commends itself at once. The "wisdom of the serpent" has

a root in allegory or in legend, no doubt, but the "gentleness of the dove" is obviously appropriate.

With no one of these expressions would one be at the pains of quarrelling. And, giving due credit to the popular wisdom that these proverbs represent, one is but the more painfully surprised by the creatures that humanity has elected to the high pedestals of typical folly and stupidity—the donkey and the goose. This mistreatment of the quadruped is essentially a modern and a Western blunder.

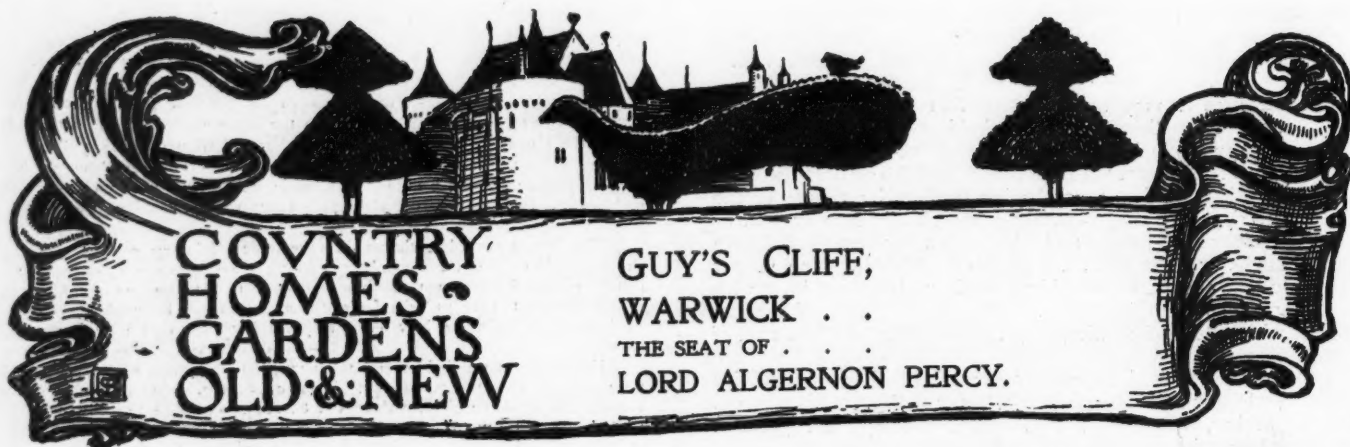
An ass of the East is, and has been of old, held in the highest honour. He has degenerated in stature under our care or carelessness, but he is sagacious as he is patient, with notions of shifting for himself, by necessity taught him, far superior to those of a stall-fed thorough-bred. The goose, too, has honourable mention in antiquity for the cackle that it raised on the Capitol when the Gauls came to the gate of the Imperial city. This may have been accident; we have no proof that the geese knew them to be Gauls; but the goose of our homestead is as sapient a bird, as alive to his own interests and as capable of defending them, as there is in the world—always excepting the corvix tribe, with their cunning that approaches the supernatural, and their parsonical garb that has given to the priests in the popular phrase of France the name of "corbeaux," and to us the saying "black as a crow"—a simile that it were more than critical to challenge.



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

MAJOR FISHER.

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THE present writer retains a recollection of Guy's Cliff that will not be obliterated. It fell to him to visit the place upon a rare evening of early summer, when the hedges were white with the blossom of the scented thorn, the primroses begemming the banks, the bluebells beginning to brighten the shade, and the trees still in their freshest green. Along that beautiful road from Warwick he had journeyed, sometimes under the deep shade of immemorial trees, anon looking out over the country, remembering how the jeering Gascon, Edward's hated favourite, hastily condemned by angry barons in Beauchamp's stronghold at Warwick, had been hurried, accompanied by a hooting crowd, along the very same way, to his beheading on Blacklow Hill.

The writer did not forget the famous Guy, Earl of Warwick, slaughterer of the Dun Cow, who retired to Guy's Cliff long ago; and, as he approached the scene, the silvery tinkling of bells was heard. They were hanging to the necks of dun kine in the meadows, sleek and beautiful, and possessing none of the terrors of the draconian creature—*monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens*—that fell beneath the blows of heroic Guy. Then there opened a prospect of Guy's Cliff itself, half disclosed at the end of a grandly

picturesque avenue of gnarled and twisted old Scotch firs, its front flecked by the evening sunshine. It was a foretaste of what was to come. Down a narrow lane went the wayfarer in quest of the famous mill by the Avon—a place where many have ground their grain ever since Saxon times—picturesqueness, indeed, he said, with that quaint gallery embodied in wood and stone; and beyond it the footbridge and the meadows, through which you may fare forward to Leamington.

But the mill looks out across a broad expanded sheet of the famous Avon—a lake in extent and character—with water-lilies upon its surface, willow and ash dipping their trembling foliage in the water, and in the deep shadows of the bank green grasses rising from the pools. The slanting sunlight fell athwart the magic scene, filling the limpid air with radiance, lighting up like a patch of gold the strip of meadow on the further bank, and making splendid the great house rising in the cliff beyond. It is a mansion with a character all its own. You do not here pause to question the architecture, nor to think of the style of the building; you recognise that Guy's Cliff belongs to, and is indeed a part of, the scene you behold; that it grows, if the phrase be permissible, from the rock, in massive grouping, filling





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GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—GUY'S CLIFF: THE FOOTPATH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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SOUTH GARDEN AND AVENUE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the exquisite framework, completely embowered amid noble trees, dignified by lofty elms and by great firs with their rare purple tinge, contrasted with the gay colouring of flower-beds below. It is a place meet for the Muses, a veritable castle of Otranto, seeming as if it might be the home of romance. These were the impressions of a visitor who saw Guy's Cliff, as it were, by surprise, and saw it with such conditions of atmosphere and sunlight as Claude or Turner would have desired.

The place is, moreover, one of singular interest, and its legendary history is full of romance. Leland spoke of its predecessor as a "house of pleasure," and the situation attracted the notice of Evelyn. There is, undoubtedly, something of extraordinary attraction about it, and we read without surprise that the famous Guy, who in the light of legend has assumed proportions so heroic, retired to the enchanting margin of the

stream—"his battles o'er"—to court abstraction from the world. Here for three years he dwelt, unknown and unrecognised by "Fair Phyllis," his wife, though daily he came, clad in the russet garb of a palmer, to solicit food from her bounteous hand. The legend says that not until his end was near did he disclose the rock-bound hiding-place that had been his home. There are caves in the rock upon which Guy's Cliff stands, wherein it is certain that anchorites did actually dwell. Near the chapel—dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen, and erected in the time of Henry VI., and wherein is a mutilated statue attributed to the hero—are Guy's Well and Guy's Cave, the latter a rude excavation in the rock, now entered between heavy oaken doors. Here a Runic inscription of the tenth century has been discovered, interpreted to embody the prayer of Guhthi, the hermit, whose occupation of the place may have given rise to the stories of

Guy. But the hero is not represented only by his well and cave, for at Warwick Castle they have a wondrous equipment which, it is said, he wore—body and horse armour and a two-handed sword, with a fork, and a prodigious porridgepot, no doubt used for cooking the rations of soldiers at a later day, as well as "Fair Phyllis's slippers," being really iron slipper-stirrups of the time of Henry VI.

In ancient times Guy's Cliff was known as "Gibbelclyve," and perhaps its present name came to it out of honour for the memory of "redoubtable Guy." There does not appear to have been any residence of importance at the place in the Middle Ages, but Henry V., who visited it from Warwick, determined to establish a chantry for two priests on the spot. He died, but Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick—the same who founded the exquisite chantry chapel in Warwick Church—carried out his wish, and Rous, the Warwickshire antiquary, was



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A CORNER OF THE LAWN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

once the chantry priest there. At the Dissolution the place was granted to Sir Andrew Flammock, whose daughter and heiress married John Colburne. This gentleman sold it to Mr. William Hudson of Warwick, and by inheritance and sale it passed through the hands of the Beaufoys to Mr. William Edwards of Kenilworth, who sold it in 1751 to Mr. Samuel Greatheed, the owner of large properties in the West Indies, who twice represented Coventry in Parliament.

Guy's Cliff was at that time an inconsiderable country house, approached by the great fir avenue, which is no longer used as a drive, the lodge entrance being nearer Warwick. The new possessor built the present front facing the courtyard—which has partly been excavated out of the rock—and did much else to improve the place, but the present character of the house is due to his son, Mr. Bertie Greatheed, who almost entirely rebuilt the house from his own plans in 1822. This may be said for his work, that he well understood the character of the locality, knew what should be the appropriateness of the structure in general character, and erected a mansion that groups very nobly amid its surroundings. Mr. Greatheed also much improved the grounds and gardens, formed paths, and introduced many adornments,



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THE ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and his work has been carried on by his successors. Through the marriage of his granddaughter, Guy's Cliff passed to the Hon. Charles Bertie Percy, and to the hands of its present possessor. A point of interest associated with the Greatheed family may be noted here. Roger Kemble with his theatrical company was accustomed to perform at Warwick, and Lady Mary Greatheed was attracted by his daughter, the future Mrs. Siddons, and was wishful to make a home for her at Guy's Cliff. Her father, disapproving of her affections for Mr. Siddons, a member of the troupe, fell in with the idea, and the girl was received by Lady Mary, with whom she lived for some time. The attachment was not, however, broken off, and the marriage took place at Coventry in 1773, and the famous actress—of whom a bust is in the house—was afterwards several times a welcome guest at Guy's Cliff.

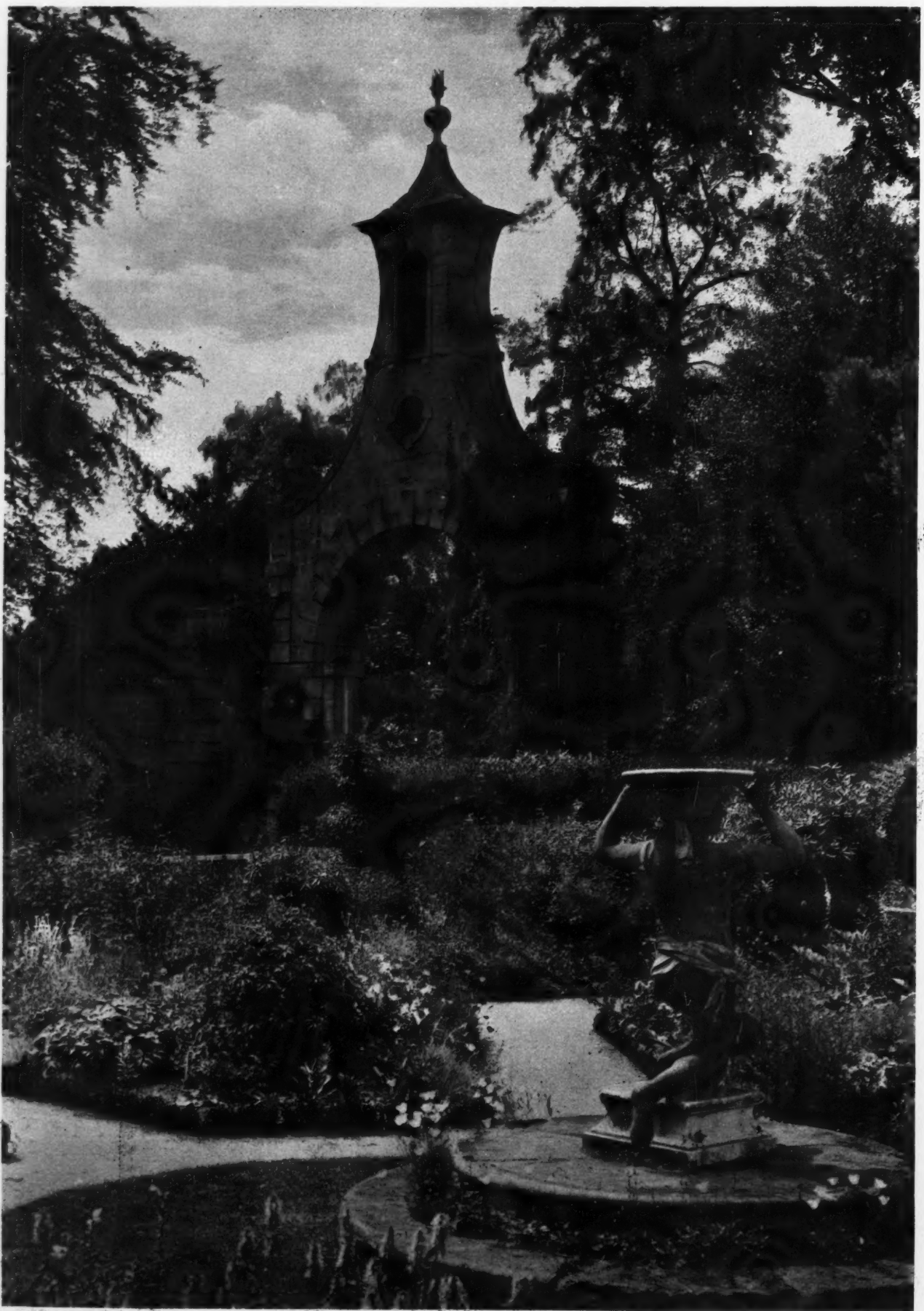
The account which has been given of the character of the surroundings of the house will suggest to the reader, having the pictures before him, how very charming are the features of the gardens about Lord Algernon Percy's stately home. The very situation, which is remarkably picturesque, being a noble cliff of sandstone rising by the bank of the Avon, precluded any formal arrangement, if such had been desired. When Evelyn visited



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LAKE AND LANDING-PLACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—GUY'S CLIFF. THE SUNDIAL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

"Sir Guy's Grot" from Warwick, he described it as "a squalid den made in the rock, crowned yet with venerable oaks, and looking on a goodly stream, so as it were improved as it might be, it were capable of being made a most romantic and pleasant place." It may be doubted whether the hand of Evelyn himself could have done better with that marvellous combination of wood, water, rock, and meadow which is found at Guy's Cliff. The ancient trees are particularly beautiful, and though some of the grand old firs in the avenue are long past their prime, most judicious planting has gone forward, and the character of the trees, with their varied foliage, invests the grounds with remarkable charm. So beautiful are those growing by the margin of the river that it has the aspect of a romantic water avenue. One cedar is particularly noble, and is reputed to be the largest in the county.

Splendid is the aspect of Guy's Cliff from almost every point in its surroundings, and the house itself is placed in a particular position of vantage for the enjoyment of the scenery and gardens. From the windows of the drawing-room there is a succession of enchanting views of garden, lawn, wood, and river. The most romantic of these is towards the old mill, across the space of shimmering water, enframed in the glorious foliage, where it issues from beneath the dark arch, stirred by the slow revolving of the wheel. The sombre shadow of elms and tall firs is relieved by the bright flower beds, and the whole combination of effects would be hard to excel. It is bright and beautiful in the sunshine, and full of varied charm. The walks are skilfully contrived to give alternate shade and brightness, and those by the margin of the stream under the wall of rock are singularly beautiful.

The garden adornments are both natural and artificial. From the Cave of Despair we emerge to sunlit spaces, where radiant flower beds glow in the summer. There are spaces of the greenest lawn, shadowed by most handsome trees. Water-lilies add beauty to the lake, and irises and other water-loving plants are thick upon the banks. Generally the style of gardening may be described as natural. The



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THE UNDER CLIFF.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

partly by reason of their cleverness in choice of a subject suited to them both. Both of them are romantic in their method; each has a pretty and a nice turn of phrase; Mr. Mason is the more exuberant, Mr. Lang the more critical of himself and of others. Finally, they deal with a period and a state of society, the period of Jacobite plots, of which Mr. Lang is past master. At any rate between them they make men and women, especially men, live and move and have their being in a very dramatic fashion.

The first of the men, and perhaps the leading character of the book, is George Kelly, sometime a parson of Trinity College, Dublin, who has suffered deprivation for a loyal sermon. We meet him first in Paris, at a Jacobite party, of which the gaiety and the unreality are described with a touch so delicate as to be almost pathetic. He has invested his patrimony in Law's Company of the West; he is on the eve of starting upon a plotting expedition to England with a view to persuade Lord Oxford to join the cause; he is under the full influence of the glamour of Fanny Oglethorpe's eyes, when suddenly he stands as though he had seen a ghost, "as though some strange news had come of a sudden knocking at his heart." And then suddenly he starts singing a Jacobite ballad. "It was not



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THE FERRY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

south garden is particularly attractive, with a wealth of many flowers, and the kneeling Slave in lead curiously supports a dial, while a charming vista is opened up through an avenue, with a meadow rising beyond. It is not necessary, however, to describe all the garden attractions of Guy's Cliff. Enough has been said to indicate that it has a special character arising from its particular situation. The Avon is a beautiful river, and some of the enchanting scenes through which it flows have been illustrated in these pages. Stoneleigh and Warwick Castle are almost neighbours of Guy's Cliff, which possesses certainly one of the fairest domains in all the beautiful county of Warwick.

## A BOOK OF THE DAY.

RARELY during recent years at any rate, perhaps never, has collaboration been so absolutely and remarkably successful as that between Mr. Andrew Lang and Mr. A. E. W. Mason in "Parson Kelly" (Longmans). The reference, of course, is to collaboration in a novel. Men and women may write history, of sorts, and biographies and books of travel in partnership easily enough. But your novel, with its rush of incident and its nice study of character, is another matter altogether. Nevertheless, Mr. Lang and Mr. Mason have succeeded admirably here,

the practice to allow the parson to sing without protest, for he squeezed less music out of him than any other Irishman could evoke from a deal board with his bare knuckles.

But this time Parson Kelly:

"He sang his song from beginning to end, and no one interrupted him, or so much as clapped a hand over an ear, and this not out of politeness. But his words so rang with a startling fervour, and he stood with his head thrown back, rigid in the stress of passion. His voice quavered down to silence, but his eyes still kept their fires, his attitude its fixity. Once or twice he muttered a word beneath his breath, and then a hoarse cry came leaping from his mouth:

"May nothing ever come between the cause and me, except it be death—except it be death!"

The extract gives the keynote to Kelly's romantic character; but even better than him one likes his constant companion Nicholas Wogan, who is like his House (see the Dedication) "in prosperity (not that he saw much of it), splendid; in exile and poverty, gay and constant; of loyalty, unshaken." They start by different paths. Kelly, disguised, goes to London as a lace merchant; Wogan, the big Irishman, the fighting man, *via* Cadiz, and in company of the Spanish Fleet, which was dispersed off Finisterre, and so by way of Scotland to London, where they meet. So they go, Kelly as Mr. Johnson, Wogan as his private secretary, to Lord Oxford's house at Brampton Bryan, where they are received by Lady Oxford, and this, in a very clever passage, is her ladyship, of whom one might well say *Vera incessu patuit Dea*.

"She was for her sex uncommonly tall, and altogether of a conquering beauty, which a simple country dress did but the more plainly set forth. For, seeing her, one thought what a royal woman she would look if royally attired, and so came to a due appreciation of her consummate appearance. Whereas, had she been royally attired, her dress might have taken some of the credit of her beauty."

Of Kelly Lady Oxford makes an absolute and easy conquest. She plays with him to her heart's content. She gives him her miniature. She becomes his Smilinda and he her Strephon. But honest Nick Wogan is of shrewder mood.

"Woman," he said, "is very much like a jelly-fish—very pretty and pink and transparent to look at, but with a devil of a sting if you touch it."

Now behold, when Kelly and Wogan and Lady Oxford are in the garden, enter suddenly one Scrope, who, "without any pretension to good looks, had a certain sinister distinction," who recognises both the Jacobites, and tells them something of their past meetings, then turns to the lady, asking whether she desires to be reminded of the particulars of her acquaintance with him. Saying, "It was a slight thing at

its warmest, and, I thank God, none of my choosing," she goes off into the house with Kelly, leaving Wogan to deal with Scrope. They struggle, they go away to fight a duel, Scrope inveigles Wogan into a chaise, makes him drunk and gets rid of him. Events begin to move fast, and I can find space only for a few striking scenes. One, very complete from beginning to end, is that in which Lady Oxford, having really lost money at cards, induces Kelly to hand over to her his fortune—Law's Company of the West has gone right—for investment. It is in the course of this that the hard, wicked, beautiful woman shows the one touch of honesty and remorse of all her life.

"Must the woman always owe, the man always pay?" she asked, but in a broken way, and with almost a repugnance for herself. Indeed, she barely finished the question, and then, with an abrupt laugh, crossed to the window, drew aside the curtains and gazed out upon the darkness and the glimmering snow.

"A strange cold world," she said, in an absent voice, "with a strange white carpet."

Mr. Kelly, in truth, had given her a glimpse into a world yet stranger to her ladyship than that which her eyes beheld—a world that had an odd white carpet too, though the feet of those who paced it as often as not were stained—a world of generous impulses and unselfish devotions. Into this world Lady

Oxford was peering with an uneasy curiosity. Perhaps for a moment she compared it with her own; perhaps she was caught by it and admired it; but if so it was with a great deal of discomfort.

The next, very clever, describes the parting of the infatuated Kelly and Lady Oxford, and the giving of the miniature.

But the moment Smilinda and Strephon were left alone. "Oh!" wailed Smilinda, and her arms went round Strephon's neck. "*Hereuse en jeu, mal-heureuse en amour*. O fatal cards, would that I had lost this dross!" cries she, with her eyes on the glittering heap of guineas and doubloons strewed about the table. "Oh, Strephon, thou wilt forget me in another's arms. I dread the French syrens."

And then Mr. Kelly to the same tune:

"Never will I forget Smilinda. If I come back with the King, and he makes me a Bishop with a pastoral crook, thy Strephon will still be true."

Whereat the lady laughed, though Kelly was jesting with a heavy heart, and vowed that Lady Mary would write a ballad on "Strephon; or, the Faithful Bishop."

Then she fell into a story of lovely Mrs. Tusher, the Bishop of Ealing's

wife, who was certainly more fair than faithful. Next she wept again, and so yawned, and gave him her portrait in miniature.

"You will not part with it—never—never," she implored.

The portrait was beautifully set with diamonds.

"It shall be buried with me," said Kelly.

A fine scene, too, there is when Wogan, on the way to Avignon, tells Kelly how he has been fooled, and another when Scrope, having followed Kelly to Avignon for vengeance, first tells Kelly that when he came to Brampton and found Kelly and Wogan there it was by pre-arrangement with Lady Oxford, and on elopement intent, and then fights him, and leaves him for dead on the road, whereby another woman, pretty Rose Townley, comes into the story. But this, which follows later, is the most finished scene of all. A lampooning ballad has been published concerning Lady Oxford and Kelly, and the former, who believes it to have been written by honest, witty Lady Mary Wortley Montague, upon information supplied by Kelly. She has, therefore, sworn vengeance; no less a vengeance, in fact, than the betrayal of the great plot. They meet at a great rout in Lady Oxford's house, and the sword-play of words is very fine and delicate.

"We were in despair, dearest Lady Mary; we feared you would baulk us of your company. France, they said, was happy in your sunshine."

"France, madam?" asked Lady Mary.

"It was your dear friend, Mr. Pope, who said you had withdrawn thither—la, in the strangest hurry!"

"Indeed, very like! I denied Mr. Pope my door two days ago, and his vanity could only conceive I was gone abroad."

"Your ladyship was wise. A poet's tongue wags most indiscreetly. Not that anyone believes those fanciful creatures. A romance of a—M. Rémoud, for whom you should have placed money in the sinking South Sea; the Frenchman arriving in London in a hurry; Lady Mary in a hurry arriving in France; a kind of country dance figure of partners crossing. A story indubitably false, to the knowledge of all your ladyship's friends, as I took occasion to say at more than one house where the rumour was put about."

Lady Oxford had scored the first point in the game, as Wogan reckoned, and marked "Fifteen—love" with chagrin. However, he took some comfort from Lady Mary's face, which was grown dangerously sweet and good-natured. Nor was his confidence vain, for Lady Mary did more than hold her ground.

"Your ladyship's good will," said she, is my sufficient defence. My Lord Oxford is here. It is long since I paid him my respects."

"Alas! my dear Lord has lain these last six weeks at Brampton Bryan," sighed Lady Oxford, "with a monstrous big toe all swathed in flannel. Your ladyship, I fear, can only greet my husband by proxy."

There was just a sparkle of triumph in Lady Mary's eyes. "By proxy!"



Copyright GUY'S CLIFF: TOWARDS THE OLD FLOUR MILL. "C.L."

she said, "with all the willingness in the world," and she swept a courtesy to Colonel Montague, who was coming forward to join them.

Lady Oxford flirted her fan before her face.

A murmur almost of applause ran from group to group of the company.

Mr. Wogan, who loved the game of tennis, marked "Fifteen—all."

The end of the book bristles with incidents and with scenes of the most dramatic power. Fiercest, most intense in its interest, is that in which Lady Oxford tells Kelly that she has betrayed him, but that he is spared for that night, then reminds him that it is past night, then shrinks when he reminds her that she also will be compromised. Finest of all is the scene in which Colonel Montague, who has also been fooled by Lady Oxford, and is entrusted with the arrest of Kelly, is engaged with him in destroying Smilinda's letters. They are in one box, the ciphers of the plot in another. Montague begins, by accident, on the wrong box, and Kelly stops him. "You had the chance to let me destroy your own papers," he said.

"Yes, and to be a liar to a loyal gentleman, and a traitor to a more sacred cause than even my King's."

"Smilinda's!" Montague looked up in perplexity.

"No," said Kelly, and he stared for a little at the floor; then he said very slowly, "A long while ago I made a prayer that nothing might ever

come between the cause and me, except it be death. Even while I made the prayer I was summoned to visit Lady Oxford, who was then unknown to me. Well, something has come between the cause and me—honour. A more sacred cause than even my King's. Himself would say it." Colonel Montague fancied that he heard a distant regular tramp of feet like soldiers. But Mr. Kelly was clean lost in his thoughts.

"I could meet the King with a clear face, and this story on my lips," he continued, "even though it were over there in Rome, and in his old lodging. The very approach to him was secret, his ante-chamber a cellar underground. You went by night; you crossed the cellar in the dark, you climbed a little winding stair, and above, in a mean, crazy chamber, which overhangs the Tiber, there was my King looking towards England. A man like me, with a man's longings and a man's despair, but, unlike me, robbed of a nation. Day by day delay shadowed his eyes and wrote upon his face, until the face became an open book of sorrows. Yet himself would say, 'Perish the cause, perish all but honour,' and suddenly throwing up his arms, Mr. Kelly cried out in a voice of great passion and longing, 'The King! the King!'"

A strange complex character is that of Parson Kelly, full of weaknesses and full of amiabilities; and the book is now commended to the reader with the comforting statement that, after all, Parson Kelly was not hanged.

## COUNTRY GOSSIPS.—I.

"MY husband wasn't a great man for reading," the old lady I was visiting told me. "He was one of a large family, and when he was six years old he had to go out scaring the crows in the fields to earn something. So he never had time for much education. But I can read myself, of course."

That was her great resource. She was too old and too delicate to do any hard manual work, and too blind to do any needlework, except of the coarsest kind. So she used to sit there all day long, while her daughter-in-law was away at work, reading out of the Bible aloud to herself, or sometimes out of one or two books of prayers, always with a finger marking the word she was reading.

"It was the minister where we last gave me this Bible. He gave it to my husband when I was trying to teach him to read, because it had large letters and large print and big capital letters that he could read easy. It's fifty-nine years ago this year that he gave it to him. But I wouldn't have you think that this is the only Bible I've got. I've got another, but I keep it upstairs, wrapped in a handkerchief, and only bring it out on the great days like Easter Sunday or Christmas Day."

Whatever one's views may be about religion it is impossible to deny that this good old woman got a great comfort from her simple faith and her Bible. She really was a good old woman, had worked hard all her young life, and never said an unkind word of a neighbour now that she could no longer work.



J. S. Heward.

IDLE CORNER.

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GONE DRY.

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that, so far as my knowledge of geography went, he was likely to be safe from the Boers so long as he remained there. Still, they are willing enough to contribute in their small way to the War Fund, and patriotically burnt Mr. Kruger in effigy on the village green on the Fifth of November. "What a wicked old man he must be!" one of the women said to me in a horrified voice. She had evidently summed up the ethics of the situation most clearly. In a neighbouring village there is a man who was in the last Boer war, and probably would be in this but for an injury received then. He naturally poses now as something of the village oracle at IDLE CORNER, or elsewhere, when they happen to be DISCUSSING THE WAR, and attributes the present trouble entirely to past weakness. "If Mr. Gladstone had asked me," I heard him say, "I could have told him at the end of the last war that we should have to do it all again if we did not make a job of it then." Unfortunately, one cannot go back on the past.

There is much charity in the comments that they do make on the strategy. "Oh my," one of the women said, "aint they

'avin' tragics out there! But, as I say, sayin's one thing and doin's another. Talk o' Buller reversin'! 'E wouldn'treversed if 'e could 'elp it. 'E done the best 'e could." This lady, it almost goes without the saying, had a smack of the Cockney in her, by education if not by birth. Her speech was not quite that of our country-folk here. It was she who said to me as I left the house, "Oh my, I do wish you'd ask to see the baby now." So there was no help for it; I had to ask for that glorious sight. But it was curious the satisfaction she found in gratifying the wish that she herself had put bodily into my mouth.

Another instance of curious satisfaction was that which the old lady who was so diligently perusing her Bible expressed to me, saying, "For all they have given it to our poor fellows so bad out in Africky, it can't be that the end of the world's coming this time, for I do find that they used to kill a powerful sight more of them in the old days," referring, as I presume, to people like Og, the King of Bashan, and Sihon, King of the Amorites, and the multitudinous victims of Jehovah's chosen people. Perhaps it does not show want of faith to imagine that in the Hebrew enumeration an occasional decimal point may have slipped into its wrong place, indicating an extra nought or two put on at the end. But no such scepticism finds place in the mind of this good old critic of war past and present. Of course the really absorbing topic of conversation is ailments,

their own or their relatives', discussed in full audience of the latter; but by preference, as being more important, of course, their own. "Through all my illness," said the old lady already quoted, "I never lost my relish," meaning thereby her appetite; and the one term is perhaps as good as the other. There is great rivalry, never dying, betwixt them all as to the gravity of symptoms, each assuming to himself or herself, as the case may be, a distinct superiority of suffering over all

the rest. "There's never anything been seen like it in the parish," one informed me, exhibiting with a perfectly sinful pride a leg that was terrible with disease. And not less singular than this credit that they take to themselves as the chosen pastures of a specially envenomed microbe is the stark cold-bloodedness with which they are fond of describing another's symptoms and probable early demise in that other's presence. "Oh, 'tis only our Elsie. Don't you know our Elsie?" said one of our cottagers as I glanced at a poor creature beside the fire. "She's not powerful quick in the understandin'; that's how it is with her. And troubled with the bronchitis terrible all the winter. She was for ever standin' at the open door and givin' food to the birds, that's how it is with her, till the garden with scraps and things was like a lion's den. We're 'bliged to feed her so," her good and really kindly relative said, as I noticed "our Elsie" helping herself with a spoon directly from the saucepan. "She's not fit to take no solid food, for her stomach don't domesticate her food,



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## DISCUSSING THE WAR.

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## THE WATER-CART.

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let alone if she had the teeth to mash it, which she has not. She did talk of buyin' some new ones, a really new set—so extravagant, and she with one foot i' the grave, too! But as I was tellin' her, it's little use she'll have for a new set of teeth where she's goin', for it's naked we came into the world and naked we must go out of it, includin' teeth, even gold-stopped ones; and as for the gnashin', why the Lord will provide." At all which terrible harangue, which seemed to extend to the length of even posthumous prophecy, and not to be an altogether favourable forecast at that, "our Elsie" looked mildly gratified with the chastened pride of one who hears discussed the great qualities which she deems to be only justly attributed to her.

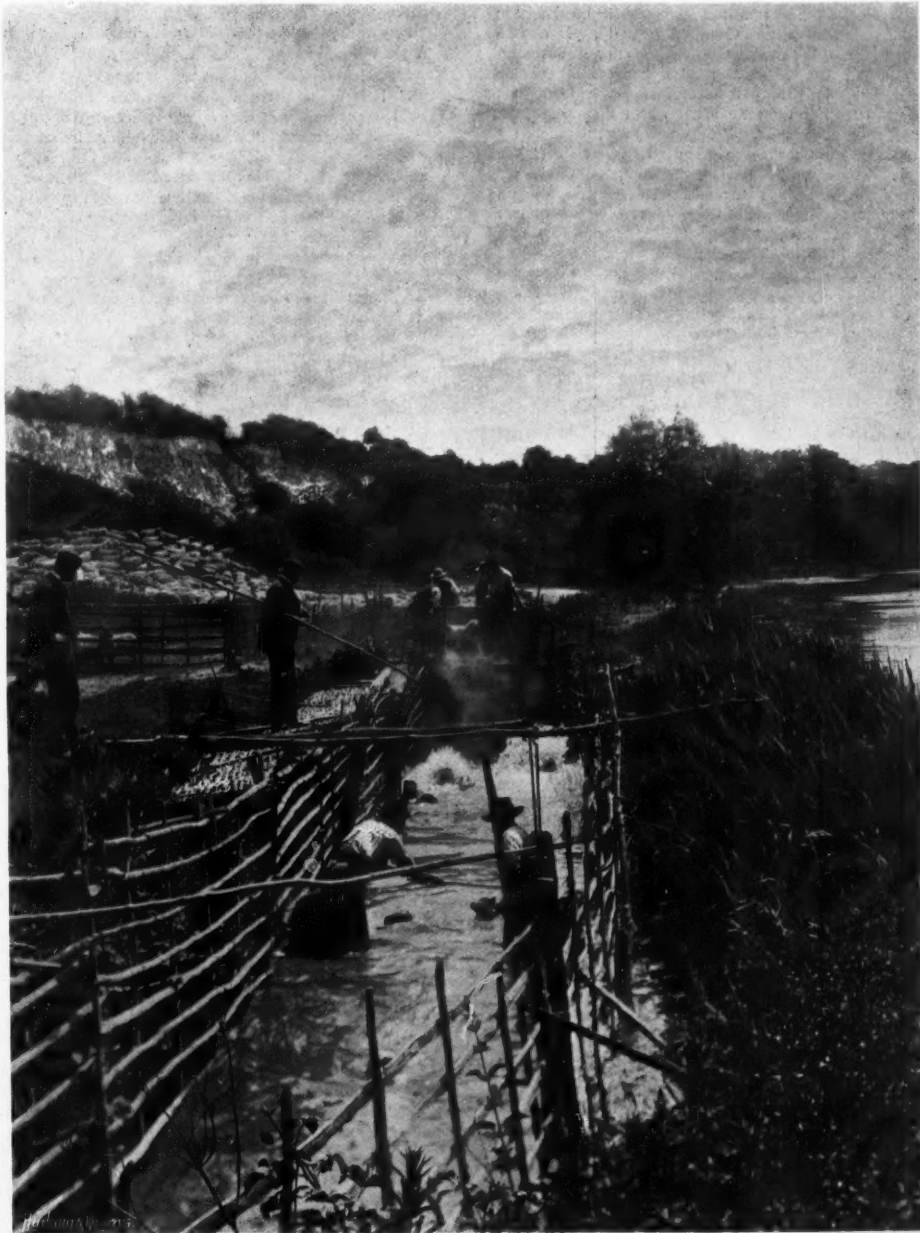
Another topic during the two last summers of drought has been the scarcity of water. Most of the wayside wells had gone dry in August, and few of them showed any sign of returning healthy moisture until the heavy and torrential rains of the beginning of November, just before they burnt Mr. Kruger—they always pronounce the "g" in his name soft. Under the circumstances they gratefully accepted the use of THE WATER-CART that belonged to Farmer R—, and went the round of the village now and then. There was a special time when they needed a deal of water in the brook not very far away that fed the pond whence the water-cart took its supplies—that is to say, when the SHEEP-WASHING had to be done—but that naturally would not be at its lowest ebb, neither did it directly affect our villagers, who have no great stock of sheep. A cow or two and some fowls, which help to make ends meet, with a little business in the dairy-farming way, compose the livestock of most. One of the most pleasant of our cottage people to visit is she whom our parson, a follower of the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, names Our Lady of Self-Pity. In her way she is a gem, a perfect treasure of querulousness, and at times appears to have an odd and almost humorous appreciation of it. She is a lone woman, in a cottage by herself, and has lately had the influenza, which may excuse a certain querulousness, if anything can. "Yes," she says, "here have I been alone, all this here blessed week, and not a soul to come nigh me. Not a bite or sup have I had in the house, not a bit of bread or of meat, nothing no more than a little tea and sugar." It seemed moderate rations for a week's siege, but I knew how to discount the lamentations of Our Lady of Self-Pity. "No fire have I had all that time, nothing no more than these few dying embers; and as I've looked on them dying embers"—she repeated the phrase with a distinct sense of pleasure in its utterance—"I've said to them many a time, 'Yes, there you are, like the life of Mary F——!' But lor there, there was

no one to help me, no one came nigh me, so the Almighty and I we pulled me through together." There was no hint of irreverence, I may say, in this suggestion of partnership, and I did not remark on it. She was a pious old woman, and would have been much shocked had the idea been conveyed to her. Instead I commented on the singular vitality of the moribund embers that had continued dying during the whole week, when she did admit she had a few sticks by her, just to keep them going. "I don't suppose there's a woman anywhere that's in such request as I am," she went on again; "there's so many as has got the influenza here-about, and it's Mary F—— here, and Mary F—— there, you'd be surprised at it. Why, it's only just now as you come in at the door that a boy came down from the big house to ask if I could go up and help, there being company; and there's all these influenzies, and there's me got to go two miles into L—— for my parish money, that's two shillings, or else I shan't get it, and there's my own hearth wanting cleaning all the time too. I don't know which way to turn, really I don't."

Mrs. F——, I should say, acted as a sort of nurse—a curious sort, I should imagine, perhaps useful as a kind of tonic or counter-irritant—when any of the people about were ill. Her presence can scarcely have had a soothing influence, I fancy.

"You've been up at the big house, I suppose. Oh, the magnificence! I never saw anything to equal to it. Oh, the drawing-room—well there, there isn't any other word for it—the magnificence! And the carpets, it's like walking on clouds, it's that soft, and the way you sink into it! only it's velvet clouds, you know. And the ceiling—all gold around it! But there, I thinks to myself, I'm comfortable here in my cottage, or will be if the Almighty keeps me till the spring—and they can't take nothing of their magnifi-

cence away with them in their coffins"—a reflection that was no doubt true, even if not new; but it was of a kind that seldom found a place in the philosophy of Our Lady of Self-Pity. Before I cease from gossiping I ought to make a correction in my census of those who have gone from us to the war. Since the calling out of more Reserves and the ubiquitous increase of enthusiasm I find that three have gone from our village. So, as a community, we are more than a fly on the wheel after all.



J. S. Heward.

SHEEP-WASHING.

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## IN THE GARDEN.

### THE SALE OF INSECTICIDES.

THERE is considerable disturbance in the trade concerning the recent action of the Pharmaceutical Society respecting the sale of insecticides, and the subject was referred to in the *Garden* recently, in which journal it is mentioned that the development of the market gardening industry and of fruit

and flower culture in private places has led to a more systematic study of insect and fungoid pests. The result of this study is, of course, to take means, in the form of "insecticides," to destroy the pests that attack the fruits and flowers of our gardens. This is natural and necessary. The nurseryman and gardener will not stand by and watch the fruits of his labours disappearing before insidious foes without adopting strong measures to check their ravages. To destroy the pests wholesale a poison known as nicotine is used, the active principle of most of the insecticides employed with such advantage by the plant and fruit grower, and it is the stoppage of the sale of these preparations except by duly qualified chemists that the Pharmaceutical Society is endeavouring to effect. To an unbiased mind this seems nothing less than a determined effort to crush not only a legitimate industry, but to hamper the work of British fruit and flower culture, and the overbearing action on the part of the society will be strongly resisted. These insecticides have been used for many years with conspicuous advantage by the market and private gardener, and to declare that nicotine wrapped up in the form sold to horticulturists is prejudicial to the safety of the citizen is absolute humbug. The matter is being taken up with considerable earnestness in Scotland, and Mr. Richards, of Southwark, is the secretary, *pro tem.*, of a society to obtain an alteration of the existing law. So far the judges have decided in favour of the retailer. The important case of the Pharmaceutical Society *v.* White was heard in the Queen's Bench Division before Mr. Justice Grantham and Mr. Justice Channell recently. It was an appeal from the County Court Judge of Worcestershire. The action was brought under Section 15 of the Pharmacy Act, 1868, to recover a penalty from the defendant White for selling a two gallon drum of a certain weed-killer, which was admittedly a poison within that section, he not being a duly registered pharmaceutical chemist or chemist and druggist. It appeared that the defendant kept a florist's shop in Worcester, and that his practice with reference to the sale of the weed-killer, which was manufactured by the Boundary Chemical Company (Limited), of Liverpool, was this: The defendant would take an order for the weed-killer from anyone who came to his shop, receive the money, and give a receipt for it. He did not, however, keep the weed-killer in stock, but would send the order on to the Liverpool company, and the company would deliver the weed-killer. The defendant received 25 per cent. of the price of the weed-killer as his commission, accounting to the company quarterly for his receipts from the sale of the weed-killer and deducting the 25 per cent. It was admitted that the course of business above explained had been pursued with reference to the drum of weed-killer in question in the present case. According to the defendant's evidence, which the County Court Judge accepted, the defendant, on being asked for the weed-killer, had said that the purchaser might order the weed-killer direct from the company, or that he, the defendant, would transmit the order. The learned County Court Judge gave judgment for the defendant, holding that under the circumstances the defendant was not the seller of the weed-killer within the meaning of Section 15 of the Pharmacy Act, 1868. The Court, without hearing counsel for the respondent, dismissed the appeal. It is quite time that a legitimate industry should be protected.

#### PRUNING TEA ROSES.

We have received several letters recently with respect to pruning Tea Roses. There is a mistaken idea that tea-scented Roses must be hard pruned each spring, removing all the wood over two years old. Doubtless this is the correct plan if growing for exhibition, but for garden decoration it would be a serious error. We have seen upon walls some of the most beautiful teas, such as Anna Olivier, Marie van Houtte, etc., covering a space from 8 ft. to 10 ft. in height and as much broad. Obviously such plants contained a lot of old wood. There is this to be said about Tea Roses. They are so excitable and grow so late in the season that their growths do not become sufficiently ripened to withstand a hard winter; then, of course, the wood becomes injured by frost, and its removal is necessary in the spring. But in the South of England and Ireland, where severe frosts are not usual, one may safely leave the old wood as it is, and cut back to four or five eyes the best of last year's growths. Discard very small twiggy shoots, and keep the centre of plants free from crowded wood to admit air and sunlight. If one has some good strong growths, bend these over almost horizontally. This can be done by fixing pegs in the ground and tying the branches to these pegs, of course not too low, say about 1½ ft. to 2 ft. from the ground. When this growth appears worn out, cut it clean away, and bring down a young shoot to take its place. It would not injure the Roses to cut them right down to the ground, for they would be sure to send up new shoots from the base, but, as stated above, it is unnecessary, and would mean sacrificing a wealth of precious flowers.

#### THE ABSENCE OF GOOD DARK ROSES.

It seems strange that raisers of new Roses do not strive to obtain good dark-coloured flowers, especially in the tea and hybrid tea classes. The last novelty was, it is true, richer in colour than the majority of new varieties that have appeared of recent years, but it is not unreasonable to expect flowers even richer than this, named Gruss au Toplitz, a very deep-coloured and beautiful flower, but as a good rosarian recently pointed out, "so many are very disappointing. Either their flowers burn, fade to purple, or refuse to expand, and, in addition, most of them refuse to bloom with any freedom. We want a Rose with the same fine form of the variety Mrs. W. J. Grant (perhaps a little more double), and the intensely rich colour of a Victor Hugo, Xavier Olibo, or Charles Lefebvre. Some are expecting great things from the new Rose Liberty. Unfortunately, Roses that are good under glass are not always successful outdoors." Therefore Rose raisers should try to secure good dark Roses, free, hardy, and of vigorous growth.

#### FORCING DUTCH AND ROMAN HYACINTHS.

We have lately received letters asking when the bright-flowered Hyacinths now seen in shops and greenhouses should be forced. There are two sets, the pretty early Roman White Hyacinth and the Dutch forms. Dutch Hyacinths for forcing should be potted in October in 5 in. or 6 in. pots, putting one bulb in each pot. The best compost to use is good turfy loam two parts, and well-decayed horse or cow manure one part, with sufficient sand to keep the material open. If loam be not easily obtained, the top spit from pasture land will answer almost as well. The pots should be very clean inside, and a piece of potsher placed over the hole in the bottom of each pot, covering this with moss or half rotten manure to ensure good drainage. Fill the pot with the compost to within 1½ in. of the rim, and put a little sand, any kind will suffice, for the base of the bulb to rest upon, adding sufficient compost to cover the bulb two-thirds of its depth. Now procure some ashes, and place a thin layer on any solid ground to stand the pots upon, and cover each bulb with a small pot. Over all place about 5 in. of ashes, sand, or cocoanut fibre refuse. The Hyacinths should remain thus for five or six weeks, longer if required for early forcing. They should then be transferred to either a cold frame or the forcing-house, and receive an

abundance of light, with plenty of air. As the foliage opens they will need plenty of water, with an occasional dose of weak liquid manure, which will greatly improve the flower spike. White Roman Hyacinths should receive the same treatment, but four or five bulbs are usually grown in one pot. They must be potted up early in September to give good results, and throw out all mite-eaten bulbs.

#### HAMAMELIS ARBorea.

At a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society Messrs. J. Veitch and Sons showed a basketful of the tree Wych Hazel (*Hamamelis arborea*) from the open ground. Judging from the comments one heard at the meeting this beautiful winter-flowering tree is yet little known, although to those keenly interested in trees and shrubs it has become quite familiar. It is pleasurable indeed to see on a sunny January day a bed of this beautiful shrub, its brown shoots bright with the starry golden flowers, with rich brown calyces and twisted petals. The whole shrub, to those who have not seen it previously, is a revelation. It is as interesting as anything that beautifies the garden in the time of Cherry and Apple bloom. The way to get the true beauty of the *Hamamelis* is to plant it in a bed, with a groundwork of *Gaultheria procumbens* or similar carpeting shrub. Then one obtains a mass of golden bloom. None of the other Wych Hazels are so free and interesting as *H. arborea*, and it will succeed in quite ordinary soil. Though a native of Japan, it is perfectly hardy, but requires a sunny position, in truth in the shade the flowers would lose some of their brilliancy and distinctness.

#### A SWEET PEA CONFERENCE.

It is funny to read about a Sweet Pea conference, but it is proposed to hold such an affair in the coming summer, with an exhibition, banquet, and other "social observances," whatever that may be, perhaps a Sweet Pea ball, with costumes something like the colour of the flowers. Well, to the unbiased mind all this sort of thing is rubbish. Why try to raise £300 for a conference upon a beautiful garden flower, increased in variety and charm by the delightful work of Mr. Eckford and other raisers, and then celebrate the proceedings by a dinner? Fancy a dinner and other "social observances" where the Sweet Pea flower is concerned! One may as well stick a rustic cottage in Trafalgar Square! The bicentenary of the Sweet Pea may be celebrated by offering prizes in connection with certain exhibitions throughout the country, or by a careful trial of varieties in the Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens to ascertain the varieties that are synonymous, and mark those worthy of special recognition; but to start a conference to consider the colour and "form" of the Sweet Pea is absurd. "Form" sounds funny. Let us fervently hope the organisers of the conference are not attempting to create a double Sweet Pea or treble its present size, but one never knows. The good work of Mr. Eckford and other raisers is seen in our gardens at the present day, and the less heard of conferences the more dignified will be the art of gardening. Conferences upon certain subjects are well enough, but not upon a beautiful garden flower of the nature of the Sweet Pea. Why not start a similar affair upon the Bluebell?

## SHOOTING GOSSIP.

FOR a fortnight or so I have been coaching a score of young would-be "soldiers at the front" in what I suppose I may term practical rifle shooting, and the novel experience has opened my eyes considerably. None of my "pupils" had ever in their lives, it seems, discharged a firearm of any sort until about a fortnight ago, except, perhaps, an occasional shot out of a toy rifle at Earl's Court, and the difficulty which they at first experienced in causing the rifle to "go off" at the moment they wanted it to would have created diversion amongst them had they been less in earnest to become sufficiently proficient marksmen to be able to pass the requisite tests. Yet these young men were not exceptionally "raw" when they came to me, I now find. I am told by several well-known rifle shots who have been striving to coach some of their friends that it is quite common for novices to miss the target altogether seven or eight times out of ten during the first few days of their training. The rifles—Lee-Metfords—were accurate enough, that I know, in spite of all that has of late been said and written concerning the inaccuracy of the Lee-Metford. Some of "my young men," indeed, became so exhausted after they had fired fifty rounds or so that I thought it prudent to forbid them to shoot any more until the following day. And these are the men who are to help us to annex the Transvaal! That they will do their best we may rest assured, but I fear that their best will be much below the average, so far as their marksmanship is concerned.

In my notes published in the issue of the week before last I alluded to the popularity likely to be acquired next season by the short cartridges already so largely in vogue. An enterprising gunmaker now sends me particulars concerning an entirely new kind of cartridge, which he hopes to place on the market early in May. The case itself is to be made of a substance superior—so he declares—to brass, paper, or pegamoid; the caps are to be larger than any at present in use; and the nitro-compound which he intends to use is extraordinarily powerful. His cartridges will contain a charge smaller in bulk by six grains than any charge of powder adopted by gunmakers during the past season for game shooting, and the charge of shot will be slightly under 10z. Lastly, the cartridges, when turned over, will be barely 1½ in. in length. Well, we shall see, though one must admit that it is difficult to understand how the very large caps will be able to withstand the strain caused by this enormously powerful explosive. The inventor is a native of Massachusetts, who has come over on purpose to "straighten" his new invention, and though our gunmakers may have reason to wish him ill-luck, they would do well to watch his movements closely.

Talking of gunmakers, a leading West End gunmaker told me last week that he meant to do his best next season to reintroduce the long-discarded semi-hammerless shot-gun. I enquired why. He displayed what the dramatists term "a sardonic smile," and at first refused to be drawn, but at last he relented. He told me that the trade in shot-guns was not in a very flourishing state, owing possibly to the war, and that he hoped that by suddenly springing upon the public a long-forgotten invention, and booming it judiciously, he would "cause business to look up." "There are many shooting men," he volunteered later in the evening, "who are nothing more than faddists at heart, and there are fishermen who come under the same category, though they are generally worse. Such men love nothing better than to purchase every new device placed on the market, and it is for this particular and useful class that I mean to bring forward the semi-hammerless. Later, I may have something better still for them, but

this 'new' sort of mechanism will interest them for the present." The first semi-hammerless gun fit to be used in the field was invented by Messrs. Turner and Leeson, if I am not mistaken, who brought out also the patent detachable muzzle, by means of which a gun with cylindrical barrels can be converted at a moment's notice into a choke-bore. Neither device, however, has obtained popularity, though some colonists speak well of the detachable muzzle, and declare that abroad they find it of great use.

"Why not teach women to shoot? Why not show them how to load and handle a rifle, and then let them—aye, *make them shoot?*" exclaims one of the many impetuous correspondents of a provincial contemporary. One cannot help smiling. One has read such letters so often before. Ordinarily they are

written by shrimpish little men whose wives are tyrants. Possibly these husbands think that— But to be serious. As a fact many more women do practise with the rifle, as well as with the shot-gun, than the general public are aware of. I think that Mrs. Follett, who shot so marvellously at the Army Rifle Meeting at Aldershot a few years ago, was one of the first women to give the pastime of rifle shooting a decisive stimulus in the ranks of the fair sex. Women who have any ambition at all love to excel in whatever they undertake to do, as some of us know to our cost, and I think I may say safely that to-day from eight to ten women are able to handle firearms skilfully where yesterday not more than one or two could tell even "which way the thing went off at."

TAZZLE.



## AT THE THEATRE

VERY welcome is the return to us of Mr. George Alexander. London can ill afford to be without any of its "actor-managers" who pursue a steady policy, at once artistic and enlightened, in these days of snap managements, whose productions are either

futile or unworthy. The new St. James's Theatre is a beautiful, spacious, and most comfortable playhouse, and nothing has been left undone in its arrangement for the contentment of the playgoer.

We wish we could speak more warmly of the play in which Mr. Alexander has chosen to make his re-entry. But "Rupert of Hentzau" is only so-so. It amuses and pleases, but it never enchains the attention or holds the imagination in the grip we expect in a good drama of romance. The effect of it is shadowy and somewhat incoherent. The characters do not appeal to us as real; consequently their adventures and trials do not cause those throbs of alternate anxiety and hope which are the essence of drama. We watch them and are entertained, but that is all. This was the effect even on those who had read the book and who had followed the story of the previous play, "The Prisoner of Zenda," and who were, therefore, well primed to take up the thread in the sequel. To the others who had done neither the effect must have been much more vague and unsatisfactory still. And every play, sequel or not, should be self-contained, self-sufficient, complete, and whole in itself.

Colour and movement and picturesqueness there are in plenty; capital acting and perfection of detail. But there is little else. There is only a suggestion of the *élan* and sparkle of "The Prisoner of Zenda"; only a faint shadow of its vigour and excitement. There is plenty of movement, but not much real progression, and, what is worse, there is more often than is comfortable a sense of mild bewilderment as to the relations the people of the drama bear to each other—a sense of effort in following the why and the wherefore of their actions; in fact, sometimes why they are there at all. By this it is not meant to suggest that the construction is really as bad as all that, only Mr. Anthony Hope, in adapting his exciting and interesting novel to the stage, has been imbued with the idea that his audience will all have read the book and will be able to fill in the interstices and blanks for themselves. He has not consciously worked upon this plan, of course, but it is a danger into which everyone who adapts a popular story to stage use is very likely to fall.

The first act of "Rupert of Hentzau" is by far the best. It has spirit, "go," dash. There is the atmosphere of "The Prisoner of Zenda" in it. But even here it is to be feared that an audience ignorant of the novels and the previous play would have but the haziest idea of what it is all about. We hear of the letter sent by the Queen to Rassendyll, and stolen by the arch-villain Rupert in order to gain the good graces of the pusillanimous King by proving to him that his wife is not faithful to him. We see the opportune arrival of Rassendyll, his assumption of the kingship and the foiling of Rischenheim, Rupert's messenger and go-between.

The next act takes us to the hunting lodge, and shows us the murder of the King and his forester by Rupert. At least, the murder is indicated; it takes place out of sight of the audience. For this reason it loses a great deal of its effect, because in these

dramas of romance we want to see the things which happen, not to be told about them. For some indefinable reason the situation does not "thrill." The great scene of the play is the duel between Rassendyll and Rupert, which brings over the footlights some, but by no means all, of the weird and powerful effect of that strenuous chapter, written with such strength and skill and restraint by Mr. Hope in his book, that it is one of the most striking descriptions of a combat in modern literature.

This scene is exciting enough to blind one to the fact that Rassendyll had no business to endanger the honour of the Queen by giving Rupert the opportunity of regaining the letter by fighting for it. Rassendyll here comes down from his pedestal of vengeance, the chivalrous defender of a woman's honour at no matter what a cost, the immovable hero who is ready to sacrifice everything to attain his end—the safety of his Queen. In fighting the duel he simply acts from a spirit of vanity—that is the real truth of it; a noble vanity, but vanity. He has the letter in his possession—he has no right to give Rupert the chance of regaining it. Suppose Rupert had won the fight—where would the Queen have been then? This may be too subtle a diagnosis of motive in a drama which is purely romantic and episodic; but we judge Mr. Hope a little more severely than we should a writer of mere costume melodrama.

In the last act we see the murder of Rassendyll and his lying-in-state, a scene not theatrically effective enough to excuse its gruesomeness. It "brings the curtain down" rather tamely.

Nothing could be better than the acting. Mr. Alexander has found a deeper note of feeling than ever before. Quite simply and naturally he expresses the overmastering love the gallant fellow feels for Queen Flavia. There is a look in his eyes, an expression on his face, a certain something in his manner which is very touching, very real, very tender. Elsewhere he plays with a buoyancy, a dash, an air of romance, which are quite in the picture, quite pleasing, quite convincing. To the part of the King, which, as before, he "doubles," he gives a clever difference which accentuates the likeness between the two men and yet the dissimilarity. One thing only need be pointed out; when Mr. Alexander is playing Rassendyll pretending to be the King, he forgets the obvious stoop which that forcible-feeble monarch possesses.

The character of Queen Flavia is of much less importance than that of the Princess in "The Prisoner of Zenda." Miss Fay Davis played it sweetly and sympathetically, if without that individuality we expect from her. She seemed to miss, too, the tragic note of the final moment of the piece. But it was a winsome and dainty and appealing figure. Miss Julie Opp gave fine vigour and earnestness to the part of Rosa Holf; Mr. Vernon, as Sapt, acted with his well-known incisiveness and force. Mr. H. B. Irving made Rupert very much like the other villains of all times he has portrayed, but he is always interesting; Mr. Esmond, as Fritz, Mr. Sydney Brough, as Bernenstein, and the others all gave distinction and interest to the play.

"THE MESSENGER BOY" is one of the very best things which even the Gaiety has given us. It is incessantly tuneful, merry, and brilliant. It is played by a company of exceeding cleverness, by a band of comedians



who probably unite in themselves more talent than has ever before been got together at the same time. Such names as Edmund Payne, Harry Nicholls, Robert Nainby, E. J. Lonnen, Lionel Mackinder, Willie Warde, William Wyes, Harry Grattan, and Fred Wright, jun., are names to conjure with. More remarkable still, each of them has sufficient opportunity. The story is clear and coherent, and the incidents bristle with fun.

Fancy Mr. Edmund Payne as a boy messenger, disguised as a yachtman, a dancing dervish, an Egyptian mummy, an ancient Egyptian king brought to life, and you have some idea of the variety and the whimsicality of it. He sings and he dances to his heart's content, and to the content of his audience. As usual, his assistant is Miss Katie Seymour, as dainty and demure as ever. Their duet in the disguise of an Egyptian King and Queen, in the costume of the frescoes, is a thing to be remembered.

To the story of Mr. Tanner and Mr. Murray, and the lyrics of Mr. Adrian Ross and Mr. Percy Greenbank, Mr. Ivan Caryll and Lionel Monckton have united the liveliest and most tuneful music. There are numbers in the score of "The Messenger Boy" which we shall all be whistling ere long. The delightful soldier song by Mr. Monckton, in which there is no trace of bombast, is worthy to succeed his "Soldiers in the Park." And what more could one say? "Maisie," sung by Miss Rosie Boote with such relish, such meaning, and such grace, is another gem of its kind. It has all the French vim without any of the coarseness. We beat Paris in this kind of thing nowadays at the Gaiety.

Through splendid scenes which show us a fashionable London hotel, Brindisi, Cairo, and a Soudanese military post, the lively story makes its way. Such costumes and such grouping there are as are seen nowhere but under the management of Mr. George Edwardes. So beautiful and so startling are they that in themselves they will be found attraction irresistible.

Miss Violet Lloyd is a pretty and engaging heroine; Miss Connie Ediss has two characteristic songs to sing; Mr. Tresahar, a newcomer to musical comedy, did very well. Once only does Mr. Edwardes revert to the antiquated darkening of the stage without adequate cause; twice only are we offended by things better left unsaid. Altogether "The Messenger

Boy" will lend a grateful merriment to our depressed capital for a good many months to come.

SO Mr. Charles Frohman is about to retire from the direction of the Criterion Theatre, which he held jointly with Mr. Charles Wyndham. Mr. Frohman has been led to take this step, probably, by the fact that he is to have his own theatre in St. Martin's Lane. For the future the Criterion will be under the management of Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Arthur Bourchier, which seems to be a particularly promising conjunction of forces. If Mr. Bourchier proceeds along the lines he laid down for himself at the Royalty all will be well. We want Miss Violet Vanbrugh to be permanently installed in a home of her own, where her talents can develop consistently by the interpretation of characters suitable to her. And her range is so wide that this would imply no restricted policy. Drama, high comedy, light comedy, and farce find in her a ready adherent—she is admirable in all of them.

Mr. Bourchier and Mr. Wyndham have made a happy choice in the selection of their opening programme. They will revive Captain Marshall's extremely clever whimsical comedy, "His Excellency the Governor," which was withdrawn from the Court Theatre long before its popularity was exhausted, owing to earlier arrangements made by the management. For this they have been fortunate enough to secure the services of Miss Irene Vanbrugh, who will play her original character until she is required to rejoin the forces of Mr. Hare in the country. Mr. Bourchier will take up the character of His Excellency, and Mr. Dion Boucicault will resume his old part. Miss Violet Vanbrugh will not be seen in this, as she is to appear in the revival of "Dandy Dick" at Wyndham's Theatre. Mr. Bourchier will also transfer "Dr. Johnson" to the Criterion.

The re-entry of Miss Violet Cameron to active service is particularly interesting. As Jack, the hero of the pantomime at Drury Lane, she will make a stately and handsome figure, and her fine voice will find full scope in reaching the furthest wall of the spacious National Theatre. Much regret was felt that the illness of Miss Nellie Stewart prevented her appearance in "Jack and the Beanstalk," but the opportunity thereby provided for the reappearance of so great a favourite, who has been too long absent from the stage, atones in great measure for that regret. But we all hope to see Miss Stewart thoroughly restored to health and once again following her profession.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell's intention to make the revival of Sudermann's "Heimath"—called "Magda" in its English guise—her next effort at the Royalty Theatre, will enable her to reappear in one of her most successful assumptions. As Magda, she shows exactly those qualities in which she is supreme—the qualities of the modern woman of nerves, highly strung, imbued with a sense of her own individuality and the necessity for the growth of her own Ego. It is a fine piece in many ways, and one which appeals very strongly to the progressive party among the playgoers. And, although progressive, it has none of the unfitness for public representation of many of the works over which the young bloods have spread their wings. It is to be hoped that Mr. Forbes Robertson's health will permit him to appear in the revival. PHŒBUS.

## Her Majesty's Mails: A True Episode.

IT was a walk of two miles to the post office. But few think of distance in Scotland, and in this particular case scenery lent endless variety to the monotony of exercise.

October had dominion over the land, and mountain, water, wood, and heath were all glorified by the evening light of a waning year.

The post office, when stamps are the only object, is a dull episode in a lovely walk, and as I drew near I felt some sympathy with the man, who in an effort to vary the common formula, requested a shilling's-worth of the "best" stamps, and was politely handed a dozen with the reply, "We only keep one quality, sir." But that was a female clerk in a London office. Here things were otherwise, so much otherwise that I think they must be unique.

The post office consisted of a cottage, or I thought it did, till I got inside. Then I found it was only created to order out of a table, and finally it dwindled down to an old candle box. The paraphernalia of a state institution, the Duke of Norfolk, and red tape, all contained in a candle box!

This didn't dawn on me all at once, for there was a certain ceremonial to be gone through before one arrived at the candle box. When I entered the cottage I stepped into the family living room, large and lofty for its kind. A four-post bedstead in one corner showed that it served a double purpose. There were several people in the room, and as I stood on the threshold and requested stamps, an old lady of weather-beaten countenance approached. Then the post office came into being. A table standing before a cupboard was moved in front of me, and behold, I was at the post office counter.

"Ye'll hae come a bit way," said the old lady, placing a chair at my disposal, "was it stamps ye wud be needin'?"

"Yes, a shilling's-worth, please."

Then from the cupboard, out came the candle box, and I feasted my eyes on the contents—stamps of sorts, but of limited number, some parcel post labels, half-a-dozen selected postal orders—these last were issued on the spot, but were only cashed at twenty-four hours' notice—and an ancient leathern purse, which later I discovered occasionally held change to the value of half-a-crown; but more often than not change had to be taken in stamps, for the postman daily carried off all receipts to the town, some twelve miles or more distant.

I took a brief glance at the other occupants of the room. An old woman sat in the chimney corner, "chovelling"; another, somewhat younger, was standing over a bowl, washing up crockery, and a good-looking young woman occupied herself in

watching me. She was certainly the daughter of my friend counting out the stamps, but the other two I couldn't place, and I walked home with my curiosity aroused because baffled.

It was a wet day when I next volunteered to execute commissions at the post office. The old lady received me. She was alone except for the "chovelling" ancient in the chimney corner.

"It's an awfu' day," she said, fetching a chair. "Will ye no be seated?"

"I'm afraid I'm too wet. I think I'd better stand."

By this time she had built the post office, and inaugurated it with the candle box.

"Is it stamps the day?" she asked.

"Not to-day. I want a postal order for fifteen shillings, please."

She took up the little paper bundle, and, holding it close to her eyes, laboriously looked it through.

"There's no just that. We maun mak' it oot o' the ithers."

As though mathematics were her habit, she chose out three orders, seven and six, five shillings, and two and six, and laid them on the table.

"You can't do better?" I asked.

She shook her head, but added hopefully, "Come Friday, I would get it frae the toon."

"No, no, it doesn't matter I'll take the three."

Then came the serious business of the date.

She got out the stamp, and looked at it helplessly.

"I canna see to do it," she said, "my sicht is no that guid."

I took the stamp over, saying, "I'm afraid your eyes are bad." The fact was all too visible.

"Have you seen a doctor?" I continued.

"Ay, have I, last fall in Glasgow."

"And what did he say?"

"He just took me to the windy and lookit. An' he says, 'it's just a little'—I don't richt ken the word—a little car—cart comin'."

"Yes, yes, cataract."

"Ay, that's it. The ither ee, ye ken, was destroyed with inflammation when I was nineteen."

"That's bad. Can you see to read at all?"

"Oh ay, gin I get a bit print that is large and bonnie."

I handed her the stamp correctly adjusted, and turned to say a few words to the old fossil, who seemed wide awake and eager for some notice. She began to talk at once, volubly but not quite connectedly, on the delights of Glasgow. Suddenly I heard my postal friend in a low voice behind me.

"You'll no ken, she's a wee daft."

"Oh!" I said, quick in comprehension, and returned to the counter.

"Ye'd no know," said the Duke of Norfolk's representative, carefully translating her Scotch. "Ye'd no know that she's a little mad, an' the ither one too."

I jumped. "What, both of them? And they both belong to you?"

"No that, but they board wi' me. Puir bodies, there's nae harm in them, but gin they talk to a leddy, maybe they'd go too far."

"And you look after them entirely? What a trouble for you."

"There's naething done in this world wi'oot trouble," was the reply, with a patient smile. "It's no easy tae get lodgers in this pairt, an' I'm glad tae tak' them. Ilka nicht I lock them into their room, an' they canna get oot o' the garden at the back."

"Are they never troublesome?" I asked, much interested.

"I wudna say just that. Times, naething is richt, an' times they are vera kind like. Puir bodies, they ken nae better, ye ken. My daughter helps see tae them when she's no sae sair frettin' after Jock Macdougall. He went to Lunnon, ye ken, forby six months, and Janet was fond like o' him."

I nodded, now understanding the young woman's listless looks and silence.

I had tendered a sovereign in payment of my orders, and for some time the old lady had been searching the depths of the office purse for change. Now she laid out a series of small silver coins and a few coppers, two and fourpence halfpenny in all, and I wanted over four shillings to balance.

"Ye'll no want stamps for sic a sum," she said doubtfully.

"Hardly; but I think I can manage it," and I produced my purse, and made matters right.

I had finished my business, and collected my gloves and umbrella. Outside, the rain was pouring in torrents, and the wind rising.

I turned at the door, and nodded her good day.

"You'll have bad weather here in winter," I said.

"Ay, it will be bad times, but we hae mony a bonnie day," and her swift smile lighted up the time-worn features, and sent me home unconscious of the storm's violence. For I had found one who in the grey monotony of her existence yet counted up the "bonnie days," and found them many. MARY MURRAY.

## KNOWLTON BASSET-HOUNDS.

THE pack of basset-hounds so graphically depicted in our illustrations are of peculiar interest from many points of view, most interesting of all, perhaps, because they have a mistress and not a master. What is more, save for the fact that a little boy appears to be allowed to carry a whip on occasion, they seem to be almost entirely run by ladies, although a big brother is allowed to have something to say on the kennel management. The Knowlton basset-hounds are a private pack having their headquarters and kennels at Knowlton Court. The mistress of the bassets, the M.B.H. in fact, is Miss Gladys Peto, and the whips are Miss M., Master, and Miss Doris Peto; the mere male, Mr. Geoffrey Peto, is relegated to the position of third whip. The pictures really give an excellent idea of basset-hounds and the character of the sport which may be obtained from them. They also show the hounds to be thoroughly workmanlike and of good type.

And here let us pause for a moment. Besides being near relations to dachshunds, being in fact merely a French version of the dachshund, they are not fast. But they are patient,

persevering, indomitable. Emphatically they are the hounds to be followed on foot, not on horseback; fitted rather for pursuing the hare over private ground than for general use; better fitted

for that purpose than are beagles or harriers, both of which have the disadvantage of going far too fast on occasion. And when you come to think of it, what a blessing it is that there should be hounds capable of being followed on foot, so that man and woman, without any extraordinary exertion, may see something of the sport and learn something of the intricacies of venerie. Outside beagles there are no hounds except otter-hounds with which the mere pedestrian can see sport. And the pedestrian is worth considering for two reasons. In the first place—strange as it may seem, and as the officers of the Imperial Yeomanry have discovered of late—it is not everybody that can ride. Secondly, there are heaps of men who can ride well enough who cannot afford to ride to



MISTRESS AND WHIPS.



BRINGING UP THE HOUNDS.



ACROSS A PLOUGH.

hounds. Therefore everything and every pack which tends to give encouragement and opportunity to him who is willing to run is entirely to be commended. Even without the notes made on the occasion when these photographs were taken, it is easy to see that Miss Peto and her sisters are thorough sports-women. For example, in the third picture we see them with their hounds walking a plough—which is unpleasant at the best of times—and searching the ground very thoroughly. This is the kind of task a great many ladies would have shirked, but we like the Misses Peto all the more in that they stick to it. Similarly in the fourth picture they are close to the hounds when they are drawing either stubble or rough grass. We cannot say which. In fact, a pack of bassets will show good sport to all sorts and conditions of men and women. There is no reason why they should not be an adjunct to some of the most modern girls' schools, like that at St. Andrews. There, as all the world knows, the girl students live as nearly as possible the life of public school boys; and as Eton has its pack of beagles, and for



DRAWING.

—the music of bassets is hardly to be beaten—through Tickney Shave. Then off they streamed in the direction of Betteshanger, and there there was a check; but the mistress cast

forward, and the trusty little hounds were soon on the true line again, and the hare, after the manner of her kind—a manner which is sometimes convenient to the slow runner—did not take a straight line, but circled round again in the direction of Knowlton. Unfortunately, she was headed, and again made for the plough, where the leader of the pack, a very workmanlike black-and-tan hound, did some wonderful work. Again the quarry was afoot, and this time made for the coverts at Betteshanger, where she found a safe refuge. It is one of the incidents in hare-hunting on foot, and one which is calculated to commend it to ladies, that, on the whole, a vast amount of sport goes to a very little blood. But that was not the end of the day's sport. In that part of the country hares—which are almost extinct in other parts—are clearly numerous, and, on a fresh draw, the hounds were soon



A CHECK.

on a second hare, which made off at a rattling pace towards Shingleton, and then towards Castry Wood, where, after a slight check and a forward cast, a line was soon picked up again and carried on to Great Hop Wood. Here again the hare was headed off, but was soon viewed going in the direction of Pane Court. Darkness, however, put an end to the day's sport, which, nevertheless, had been of a very enjoyable character.

The nucleus of this interesting pack was bought in Yorkshire, but it is pleasant to announce that the last breeding season was very successful, and that next season Miss Peto will be able to hunt a pack composed in a very large measure of hounds bred in her own kennels. Her rules are of the strictest, and rightly. Under no circumstances is any man or woman permitted to ride except one of the whips, who is mounted only in order that straggling hounds may be caught quickly when occasion arises. This is entirely a right principle, for once the thin end of the wedge has been inserted, we have known many a pack which provided sport for the humble runner to be completely spoilt. No doubt all our readers will join with us in wishing every prosperity to Miss Peto and all her pack.



THE question of the desirability of forming Government studs has once more been raised by Mr. Bourne in the *Irish Times*. Irish horses are, says this writer, growing weedy, and he seems to favour the purchase by Government of large race-horses. The usual accusations are brought against the modern race-horse of lack of staying power and stamina. In the interests both of racing and horse breeding it is worth while to consider how much truth there is in this indictment against our thorough-breds. First, let us take the question of staying power. Is it true that our race-horses are less distinguished in this quality than the animals raced by our forefathers? Talking the other day to a well-known veteran owner of race-horses, I put this point before him, to which he replied that in his experience staying power is in a great majority of cases merely a question of training. Horses never have the chance of staying over a distance, because they are never trained for anything but short courses, yet the capability to do so is there in an immense number of cases. Many animals never have a chance to show whether they can stay or not, since it is more profitable to prepare them for short races. At all events, horses go faster than they used to do, and if races were run at the same pace as formerly horses would stay the longer distances as well as ever. But it strikes me in turning over the accounts of past racing in the old sporting magazines that the additional length of races was much more nominal than real. Jockeys seem to have been in the habit of waiting on one another at a very slow pace until three furlongs or so from home, when they made a dash for the post. Practically many long races were scurries, with a flying start, in which the rider won as often as the horse. As to stamina, it appears to me that the racing career of a horse is a most stringent test. The horse which goes to the stud with a successful racing career to his credit after three years in training is bound to have some stamina and constitution. Nor, so far as I can see, do the best thorough-breds lack substance. Not to overburden these lines with examples, Blair Athol, Doncaster, Ormonde, Persimmon, Flying Fox, and Isonomy are or were all horses of substance and power enough to carry 14st. to hounds. These are the animals that give character to the thorough-bred, for they, in their most successful descendants, will have the opportunity of impressing themselves on the coming generations. But, after all, those of us who are practical breeders know that for a sire for hunters, troopers, and carriage horses the thorough-bred is not only the best, but the only one. The fact is that he is of such excellence that you can raise any kind of stock you want with his help. Race-horses for five furlongs, steeplechase-horses for four miles, hunters to cross a country, trotters in America, and troop-horses are all over the world. The thorough-bred may not be as fast or as stout as we should like him to be, but he is the fastest and stoutest horse in the world. The key to the horse breeding question is not to be found in our sires—which are good enough—but in the lack of suitable mares. The only way to secure a supply of these is to make it worth while, from a commercial point of view, to keep the best mares in the country. How this is to be done is a question I have not space for. I make no apology for this digression, if, such it be, for the topic is of great importance to the country and to racing. The racing since last I wrote has been much more interesting. We have, for example, seen three leading Grand National candidates out. Drogheda and Elliman won their races, but the former performed over hurdles. Taking the fact into consideration that we know Drogheda can get the Aintree course, and also that Manifesto is overweighted with 12st. 13lb., we have no doubt that the former will be Mr. Buteel's most likely champion. The horse has a great turn of speed, and he finished with dash and resolution. Elliman is a horse I have always liked, and, if he stands his work, should be not so very far away at Liverpool. No doubt it was not a very great performance to beat Nepote after a close finish. Yet a horse can do no more than win, and it is quite possible to under-rate a performance by dwelling too closely on the supposed quality of the horses behind the winner. Ambush II. is, I think, over-weighted for the Liverpool course, and he made no very favourable impression when he finished behind General Peace in the Middlesex Maiden Hurdle Race at Kempton Park. General Peace, on the other hand, seems improved by his hurdle practice, and it would not surprise me to see him win on the flat this spring. A good many people think none the worse of his chance for a spring handicap because of his excellent performance over hurdles. If Ambush II. was a disappointment to some, the same cannot be said of the other Irish horse, Patrick's Ball. There was a very keen desire to back him, and he won his race well. No steeplechaser of more promise has come out this season, and Lord William Beresford, whose judgment is seldom amiss, made no mistake in giving 300 guineas for him.

Although we may race, as many men do nowadays, for the sake of the

sport, yet as things are no one can afford to neglect the indications of the market in forming his judgment on the prospects of a race. For the Lincolnshire Handicap some market operations show which way the wind blows. Thus the three horses I favoured when the weights came out, Refractor, Gerolstein, and Damocles, have all been mentioned in the betting. What genuine support has gone to the first and last I am unable to say, but there is no doubt Gerolstein has been backed. Those who have backed him may have good reasons for doing so, and he is a very nice colt, but his feet must always give anxiety, and hard ground, either before the race or at the time, might nullify his chance. Refractor is a horse that everyone who sees him move, and who considers how comfortably he is weighted, must fancy. But I cannot forget the impression he left on my mind as he finished for the Hunt Cup at Ascot—that he had gone quite as far as he cared to. Damocles is a very taking horse, and if he is fit on the day, he is in about the class of company at Lincoln that he should be able to beat. Survivor is always a doubtful customer, but Olan is much improved and thoroughly acclimatised, so they tell me, but I shall be inclined to wait a little before saying much about him. Anyone who wishes, for any reason, to form his judgment and pick out a possible winner at Lincoln (always a tempting experiment, from its very uncertainty) may ask himself three questions about any given horse that has accepted. Will he start? Will he be fit? What will the state of the going be? Until we know these things nothing can be said for certain. Prudence therefore suggests waiting till the numbers go up and the horses are in the paddock before attempt to make up our minds finally.

So far the feeling of that considerable part of the racing community which loves to wager is with me, for the genuine betting on the Lincolnshire is very small indeed. Most of the real business is being done on the Grand National, which is a sporting race to bet on, as anything may win over Aintree that can stand up to the end.

VEDETTE.

## ON THE GREEN.

HARRY VARDON has gone to the States, so we are now left in the parlous condition of being without a champion in the land. By the time of publication, at least, we understand that this will be so, though for the moment Mr. John Ball is still in the country, learning his drill with the yeomanry in the North of Wales. Without a masculine champion, were the more correct form of statement, that modification being demanded by courtesy to the champion of the ladies. Vardon has chosen an excellent time for going to the States. He will get in some four months' play on the greens in their best condition, and will leave them well before the heat and drought set in. Thus he will be back in England—or Scotland rather, for it is probably thither that he will betake himself to practice at St. Andrews, where the championship is played this year—in good time to get used to the course, so as to do himself every justice in the great contest. It would be a big feat indeed to win the title for a third successive year, a feat that has not been done for many a year, and that every year, as the field increases, grows more difficult. But we quite believe Vardon capable of doing it, and there can be no question that he will start a red-hot favourite, although it is certain that he is not partial to the St. Andrews' green, and that Scotland will do her level best to take the championship out of English hands.

We are glad to see by the report of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club how its finances and its fortunes flourish. No club, perhaps, has deserved so well of the golfing community, not only in the South, but also all the kingdom over. It was to the initiative of the Royal Liverpool Club that the institution of the amateur championship was due, and every opportunity of furthering the game's best interests has always been eagerly sought by the club. When the new clubhouse was built, at very heavy expense, a few years ago, there were not wanting prophets of ill to foretell that it would handicap the finances of the club too heavily, and reference was made to the unfortunate "white elephant" of proverb. But the building appears to have been thoroughly well justified, and after all it is a point of importance to the members that they should be housed in comfort and magnificence. It is excellent to find, too, that the old club can keep itself so strongly going, in spite of the competition of the very many clubs, some of them with right good greens, that have sprung up on both sides of the Mersey's estuary, and this though the builder has taken some of the holes of the old course. We hear mooted a scheme for providing Hoylake with a promenade and all the appurtenances of a fashionable watering-place. It will be mightily regretted by those who knew and loved the old and unspoilt Hoylake if all these great doings are done. The new captain of the club is Mr. George R. Cox, with Mr. Jaudon holding the post of honorary treasurer, and Mr. Ryder Richardson as secretary.

It does not look for the moment as if a great deal of golf was likely to be played in the immediate future, so heavily does the snow lie. But if this is to be regretted as regards the present, yet as regards the future it is certain that it is good for our over-worn greens to have a little rest from the perpetual golfing treadmill that grinds over them day after day, Sunday included very often, all through the year. In the heavy snow the keenest golfer is kept at home and the green has a little respite; but for two winters past there has been no heavy snow and no respite for the green. The actual warmth and damp of the snow will help the greens not a little, but the enforced rest will help them more.



### LABOUREES' COTTAGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It is, of course, impossible to estimate the cost of any building without knowing something of the local conditions as to labour, materials, etc. But, other things being equal, the building which has the less cubical contents will be the cheaper. As my cottages, measure about 19,700 cubic feet, against 22,000 for Dr. Russell's, they would cost at the same rate, and including for fairness of comparison the bit of old wall, about £180. But I do not hesitate to add that a building of this very cheap kind, whether passed by the Board of Agriculture

or not, cannot be really good substantial work, though with great care it may continue habitable for 60 years. A word on Dr. Russell's criticism of what he calls the "fads of tiny windows and low ceilings." In building houses of any kind one is bound to consider the health and homely comfort of the inmates. In order to retain in some degree the heat of the one poor fire which is usually all the occupier of a labourer's cottage can afford, two things are essential, viz., (1) a small window area, and (2) a low ceiling. And it must be remembered that hygienic requirements are far better met by lateral than by vertical extension, and that whatever excuse there may be for obtaining increased cubical space by building rooms high in towns, there is no excuse for so doing in the country.—F. C. EDEN.

#### NATURAL HEALING OF FRACTURE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose you the leg of a partridge which has been at some time broken, and set in a wonderful manner by Nature, thinking you may like to have it photographed and reproduced in COUNTRY LIFE.—CONSTANT READER.

[We produce no illustration of this fractured and home-mended bone, and for two reasons. Firstly, the leg bone, as sent to us, would not lend itself to the purposes of illustration. Secondly, the manner in which fractures of bones in birds and beasts mend themselves is on the one hand wonderful, and on the other quite familiar. But amongst many cases of self-healed fractures which have come under our notice, this is certainly one of the most wonderful.—ED.]

#### PRUNING TEA ROSES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I shall be much obliged if you will tell me through the medium of your paper what treatment you would recommend for tea roses growing near the sea on the East Coast of Scotland. The soil is good for roses, and splendid ones are grown. Some of mine are five years old; others I have just got. We are recommended to prune each bush very much—down to the ground. Now, is that correct, or will it injure the bushes that have been allowed to make hard wood for five years? My standards have never been successful. What treatment do they require? I do not want show roses, simply good blooms and plenty of them.—ROSE.

[Standard roses are often a partial failure owing to unsuitable kinds being budded upon the briars. If your plants have made but poor growth it is either the fault of the variety, or the standard possessed but few roots when planted. We like to transplant our standards every three or four years. The best time for this is early autumn. When replanting give each tree a peck or so of prepared compost, consisting of one part each of loam, leaf soil, burnt garden refuse, and well-decayed manure. Trim over the jagged ends of roots, and remove any wild suckers there may be on the tree. If your trees have made very small twiggy growths you should cut them back hard in March, then transplant next autumn as advised. With regard to pruning tea roses, we have written a general note in the usual garden column.—ED.]

#### FLOWERS IN GRASS—SOIL GRAVEL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In my garden here *Lilium pyrenaicum* seeds itself and flowers freely under trees and shrubs and all over the lawn.—R. H. E., Tyddynllam, Corwen, Merioneth.

#### AN INTERESTING PAIR.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The pony whose photograph (done by a Charterhouse boy) I enclose is rising twenty-six, and is well known by sight to probably every Charterhouse boy for the last twenty-one years. He is under 13h., and may claim to be one of the best who ever stood on four shoes—by the way, he is still rather given to standing on two sometimes. He and his master have travelled together between 30,000 and 40,000 miles. The pigeon who sits on the seat rail was just on 23 years old when the photograph was taken. He was reared by mouth from the nest as a child's pet, and has lived in the kitchen ever since, a bird of great character, and one who has always held his own against dogs, cats, and humans. The pony stands in front of a well-known Charterhouse school-house. I doubt if another horse and pigeon of the united age of 48 could be found together.—GERALD S. DAVIES.



#### A PRACTICAL GATE CATCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Of the many inventions and patents made for gate catches the Eckley Gate Catch is about as practical a one for all-round purposes as any, and has many advantages over all others. The gate can drop to almost any reasonable limit and yet the catch will always perform its duty. It can be fitted by an ordinary workman in a very few minutes to either a right-hand or a left-hand

gate, and requires no mortising or cutting of the gate-post, and can be used equally well for round or square posts. For a hunting country it is particularly well suited, as can be seen from the illustration; the lever projecting well above the gate-post, it can be easily reached from either side of the gate with a hunting crop. It is, in fact, the simplest and best catch to open when riding that has ever been invented. It closes, of course, automatically.—W. BURDON-MULLER.

#### SPECIMEN CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of some chrysanthemums which will bear microscopic inspection. I did the photograph about a month ago, seven minutes' exposure, with the smallest stop of a Cartridge Kodak—Eastman. You can do anything you like with them.—J. G.

[The photograph shows an entirely good type of the incurved Japanese chrysanthemum, fast thrusting the true incurved aside. We are not sorry for this; the incurved flower is interesting, but its monotonous ball-like form scarcely satisfying. There is a certain formality in the incurved Japanese, that mixture of true incurved and the free "wild" beauty of the Japanese, but it is more tolerable than a flower as solid and formal as a turnip.—ED.]

#### THE STUMBLING HORSE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think many readers besides myself would be grateful if you could give us, or could get for us, a little information about the best way to keep a horse from falling when driving, and also to aid him to recover himself when he has stumbled. It seems to me that these are two rather distinct points, and points that are often confused, by the distinction not being noticed. The question, as

it seems to me, is one that should best be answered by an anatomist rather than a coachman. The latter class are generally a great deal too "practical," as they would phrase it—meaning too prejudiced, too much addicted to the views of the ancient school in which they have been reared—to be trustworthy. It is really a mechanical question. Is a horse supported by the heavy drag on his mouth? It is possible, I think, that he does get some support by "leaning on his bit," as the phrase goes; but is it not all-important, not so much that he should be so supported, as that he should be held together, back on his haunches, with his hind legs under him, in such a position that he is very unlikely to fall? It is when a horse is going slackly, not "up to his bit," that he is likely to fall, whether the drag on his mouth be light or heavy. There are many, I think, who will go with me so far, but I find that most of those who maintain my view also hold that you cannot give a stumbling horse any help by pulling at his mouth. They contend that he has to get his head well out, his neck well stretched, in order to recover himself, and that you interfere with this movement of recovery, rather than aid him in any way, by a tug at his mouth. But to me it seems as if the horse really would get a mechanical aid to getting on his four legs again by being able to lean against the bit as he is falling. It is possible, I think, that this little purchase may be just enough to turn the scale from falling to recovery; for there is, of course, a moment in which it is just doubtful which way he will go. I have here given my own ideas very roughly—the ideas of a plain man accustomed to horses and to driving, but no scientific anatomist. What I should like to see, and what, I am sure, many others would like to see, is the opinion of a really skilled anatomist on the question, or the two questions, here stated. It appears to me that this ought to be a matter not of opinion, but of mechanical fact, and so to admit of a direct and exact answer which would remove at once the ground of a lot of vague talk.—H. G. H.

[Without being scientific anatomists, we are entirely disposed to agree with our correspondent's view on this interesting and really important question that has been discussed so often. If some such scientific anatomist as he suggests would throw the light of science upon it, we are sure that many readers would welcome its rays.—ED.]